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The life of the Rev. Philip  
Henry

1840









THE LIFE

OF THE

REV. PHILIP HENRY,

BY HIS SON, THE

REV. MATTHEW HENRY.

ABRIDGED FOR THE BOARD.

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## PREFACE.

THAT which we aim at in this undertaking, and which we would set before us at our entrance upon it, is, not so much to embalm the memory of this good man, (though that also is blessed,) as to exhibit to the world a pattern of that primitive Christianity, which all that knew him well, observed to be exemplified in him while he lived; and when they saw the end of his conversation, as it were with one consent, desired a public and lasting account of, or rather demanded it, as a just debt owing to the world, by those into whose hands his papers came, as judging such an account likely to conduce much to the glory of God's grace, and to the edification of many, especially of those that were acquainted with him. He was one whom the Divine Providence did not call out (as neither did his own inclination lead him) to any very public scene of action; he was none of the forward men of the age, that make themselves talked of: the world scarce knew that there was such a man

in it. But in his low and narrow sphere he was a burning and shining light, and therefore we think his pious example is the more adapted to general use, especially consisting not in the extacies and raptures of zeal and devotion, which are looked upon rather as admirable than imitable; but in the long series of an even, regular, prudent, and well-ordered conversation, which he had in the world, and in the ordinary business of it, with simplicity and godly sincerity; not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God.

It has been said, that quiet and peaceable reigns, though they are the best to live in, yet they are the worst to write of, as yielding least variety of matter for the historian's pen to work upon: but a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty, being the sum and substance of practical Christianity, the recommending of the example of such a life, in the common and familiar instances of it; together with the kind and gracious providences of God attending it, may be, if not as diverting to the curious, yet every whit as useful and instructive to the pious readers.

According to the excellent and royal laws of this holy religion, his life was led with a

strict and conscientious adherence to truth and equity; a great tenderness and inoffensiveness to all mankind; and a strong tincture of sincere piety and devotedness to God: and according to those sacred rules we shall endeavour, in justice to him, as well as to our reader, to represent him in the following account; and if any thing should drop from our pen, which might justly give offence to any, (which we promise industriously to avoid,) we desire it may be looked upon as a false stroke; and so far not truly representing him, who was so blameless and harmless, and without rebuke.

Much of our materials for this structure we have out of his own papers, (especially his diary,) for by them his picture may be drawn nearest to the life, and from thence we may take the truest idea of him, and of the spirit he was of. Those notes being intended for his own private use in the review, and never communicated to any person whatsoever, and appearing here (as they ought to do) in their own native dress, the candid reader will excuse it, if sometimes the expressions should seem abrupt; they are the genuine, unforced and unstudied breathings of a

gracious soul; and we hope will be rather the more acceptable to those, who, through grace, are conscious to themselves of the same devout and pious motions; for as in water face answers to face, so does one sanctified and renewed soul to another; and (as Mr. Baxter observes in his Preface to Mr. Clark's Lives) God's graces are much the same in all his holy ones; and therefore we must not think that such instances as these are extraordinary rarities; but God has in wonderful mercy raised up many, by whose graces even this earth is perfumed and enlightened. But if one star be allowed to differ from another star in glory, perhaps our reader will say, when he has gone through the following account, that Mr. Henry may be ranked among those of the first magnitude.

## LIFE OF REV. PHILIP HENRY.

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THE subject of this memoir was born at Whitehall, in Westminster, on the 24th of August, 1631.

His father's name was John Henry, the son of Henry Williams, in Glamorganshire, Wales. According to an old custom in Wales, now nearly laid aside, the father's Christian name became the surname of the son. His mother was Mrs. Magdalen Rochdale of the parish of St. Martin's, -in-the-Fields. She was a woman of piety and discretion, and feared God above many. Though her husband had his employment about the court, being first one of the Earl of Pembroke's gentlemen, and afterwards page to the duke of York; yet she was altogether dead to the pleasures of the court, though

she lived in the midst of them. She looked well to the ways of her household, prayed with them daily, catechized her children, and taught them the good knowledge of the Lord, betimes. Mr. Henry has been heard to say, that he learned Mr. Perkin's "Six Principles," when he was very young; and he often mentioned with great thankfulness to God, his great happiness in having such a mother, who was to him as Lois and Eunice to Timothy, acquainting him with the Scriptures from his childhood. And there appearing in him early inclinations both to learning and piety, she devoted him, in his tender years, to the service of God in the work of the ministry. This excellent woman died of a consumption, the 6th of March, 1645; leaving behind her, an only son, and five daughters. A little before she died, she said, "My head is in heaven and my heart is in heaven; and it is but one step more, and I shall be there also."

While a child, he was often the companion and playmate of the young princes, and they were often with him at his father's house; and they would frequently speak to him of the great preferment which they intended for



him, when he was fit for it. And he kept a book to his dying day, which was given to him by the Duke of York. Archbishop Laud also, took a particular liking to the boy, because he was very officious to attend at the water-gate, and let him through, when he returned late from council; for this was a part of his father's charge. But all his early prospects of court preferment, were blasted, by the breaking up of the court, in 1641; and when he was led at any time to speak of these matters, he was wont to bless God for his deliverance from the snares of the court, in the midst of which it is so very hard to maintain a good conscience, and the power of religion. And though\* it was not like Moses, a choice of his own, when come to years to quit the court, yet, when he was come to years, he always expressed a great satisfaction in a removal from it, and blessed God who chose his inheritance so much better for him, than he would have been likely to do for himself. It seems, however, that he derived some exterior advantages, from his early intercourse with the court; for it was observable to all who conversed with him, that he had a most sweet and obliging

air of courtesy; his mein and carriage were always so very decent and respectful, that it could not but win the hearts of all who were conversant with him. Never was any man further from that rudeness and moroseness, which some scholars, and too many that profess religion, either affect, or carelessly fall into, to the reproach of their profession. It was one of his rules to "honour all men." Sanctified civility is a great ornament to Christianity. It was with him a proverbial saying, "religion does not destroy good manners." Yet he was far from any thing of vanity in his apparel, or formality of compliment in his address. His conversation was all natural and easy to himself, and others, and nothing appeared in him, which ever a sincere critic could justly call affected. This temper of his, tended very much to the adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour; and the general imitation of such an example would do much towards the healing of those wounds which religion has received in the house of her friends, by a contrary conduct.

His first Latin teacher was, a Mr. Bonner, at St. Martin's church. Afterwards, he was removed to Battersea, where he had for his

instructor, a Mr. Wells. In his papers, frequent mention is found of his grateful recollections of the benefits derived from his teachers, which may suggest to us that weighty French proverb, "To father, teacher, and God all-sufficient, none can render equivalent."

In the year 1643, he was admitted into Westminster school, and was under the tuition of Mr. Thomas Vincent, then usher, of whom he always spoke in the highest terms of commendation, as a most able, diligent school-master. After a while, he was taken into the upper school, and was there under the instruction of the celebrated Richard Busby, afterwards Dr. Busby; and in 1645, he was admitted King's scholar, partly in consequence of merit, and partly through the favour of the Earl of Pembroke. Here his progress in classical learning was great, for which he retained his taste even to the latest period of his life.

When the civil war commenced, he attended frequently, a lecture set up in the Abbey church, between six and eight in the morning. The preachers were seven of the most distinguished members of the assembly of

Divines, then in session, and were Mr. Marshall, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Herle, Dr. Staunton, Mr. Nye, Mr. Whitaker, and Mr. Hill. His mother requested of Dr. Busby to give her son permission to attend that lecture, daily, not abating, however, of his school exercise, in which he kept pace with the rest; but only dispensing with his absence for that hour. And the Lord was pleased to make good impressions on his soul by the sermons he heard there. His mother also took him, every Thursday, to Mr. Case's lecture, at St. Martin's. On the Lord's day, he sat under the powerful ministry of Mr. Stephen Marshall. This ministry he spake of to the last with great respect and gratitude to God, as that by which he was, through grace, begotten again to a lively hope. He has often been heard to remark, that it was the saying of some judicious men, at that time, that if all the Presbyterians had been like Stephen Marshall, all the Independents like Jeremiah Burroughs, and all the Episcopalians like Archbishop Usher, the breaches of the church would soon have been healed.

Mr. Henry also attended punctually on the monthly fasts at St. Margaret's chapel,

where the ablest and best ministers of England preached before the House of Commons. On these days the solemn services of the church were continued from eight in the morning, to four in the afternoon. It was his constant practice to write all the sermons which he heard from the time that he had reached his eleventh or twelfth year. At these public meetings, he experienced often, sweet meltings of soul in prayer; and once, in particular, when Mr. Bridge prayed, many warm and lively truths came home to his heart. Under such means he daily increased in that wisdom and knowledge, which is unto salvation. His own reflections on the benefits and privileges now enjoyed, made long afterwards, are worthy of being perused. "If ever any child," says he, "such as I then was, between the tenth and fifteenth years of my age, enjoyed line upon line, and precept upon precept, I did. And was it in vain? I trust not altogether in vain. My soul rejoiceth and is glad at the remembrance of it. The word distilled as the dew and dropped as the rain. I loved it, and loved the messengers of it; their very feet were beautiful to me. And, Lord, what a mercy was it, that at

a time when the poor country was laid waste, when the noise of trumpets and drums, and the clattering of arms was heard there; and the ways to Zion mourned, that then my lot should be, where there was peace and quietness; where the voice of the turtle was heard, and where there was great plenty of gospel opportunities. Bless the Lord, O my soul! As long as I live, I will bless the Lord, I will praise my God, while I have my being. Had it been only the restraint that was laid upon me, whereby I was kept from the sins of other children and youths; such as cursing, swearing, Sabbath breaking, and the like, I were bound to be very thankful; but that it prevailed through grace effectually to bring me to God, how much am I indebted, and what shall I render?"

From his own early experience he drew several important practical inferences, as

1. That they were to be blamed who laid too much stress on knowing the precise time of conversion.
2. That early piety should be recommended to all young people, as being attended with many benefits and much comfort. He was wont often to say to the young, "You cannot begin too soon to be religious,

but you may put it off too long." When discoursing one day, on Matthew xi. 30, in the conclusion, he appealed to the experience of all who had drawn in that yoke. "Turn," said he, "to which of the saints you will, and they will all agree, that they have found 'wisdom's ways pleasantness,' and Christ's commandments not grievous. And I will here witness for one, who through grace has in some poor measure, been drawing in this yoke, now above thirty years, and has found it an easy yoke, and likes the choice too well to change."

3. He also recommended it to parents to bring their children betimes to public ordinances. He would say, they are capable sooner than we are aware of receiving good by them.

4. He also recommended to young persons, the practice of writing sermons. He not only followed this practice while young, but continued it until near the close of life. He never wrote short hand, but had the art of taking the substance of a sermon in a very plain and legible hand, and with a great deal of ease.

But to return to the thread of our history.

At Westminster school, Mr. Henry had the happiness to gain the favour of that eminent teacher, Dr. Busby, who took up a particular kindness for the lad, and called him, his child. It is known to all, that Dr. Busby was famed for the rigour of his discipline, and severity of his punishments. But Mr. Henry well observes, that in so large a school, there was need of a strict discipline: and as to himself, in the four years that he was under him, he never felt the weight of his hand but once, and then he richly deserved all that he got; for being sent in pursuit of one who had played truant—he found him out where he had hid himself; but, at his earnest request, promised that he would say that he could not find him. Next morning, the truant coming under examination was asked, whether he had seen the monitor, and acknowledged that he had; at which Dr. Busby was much surprised, and turned his eyes on the monitor, with these words, “What thou, my son!” and corrected him on the spot, and appointed him to make some penitential verses in Latin; which when he brought, he gave him sixpence, and received him into his favour again.



The custom, at Westminster school, was, that all the king's scholars who stood candidates for an election to the university, were to receive the Lord's supper, the Easter before, which he did with the rest, in St. Margaret's church, in 1647. And he would often speak of the great pains which Dr. Busby took to prepare his scholars for that ordinance; and with what skill and seriousness of application, and manifest concern for their souls, he opened to them the nature of the duty. The reflexions of young Henry, on this occasion, show, that these pains were not lost upon him. The following we have from his own hand: "There had been treaties before between my soul and Jesus Christ, with some weak overtures towards him; but then, *then*, I think it was that the match was made, the knot tied. Then, I set myself in the strength of Divine grace, about the great work of self-examination, in order to repentance. And then I repented, that is solemnly and seriously, with some meltings of soul, I confessed my sins before God, original and actual, judging and condemning myself for them, and casting away from me all my transgressions, receiving Christ Jesus the

Lord, as the Lord my righteousness, and devoting and dedicating my whole self absolutely and unreservedly to his fear and service. After which coming to the ordinance, there, *there*, I received Him, indeed, and he became mine—I say, MINE. Bless the Lord, O my soul!”

Of Dr. Busby's agency in this blessed work, he makes frequent mention, in divers of his papers: “The Lord recompense it,” says he, “a thousand fold into his bosom.” Encouraged by the good effects of it in his own experience, he was himself accustomed when he became a minister to take like pains with others, at their first admission to the Lord's table; and, through grace, saw the comfortable fruits of it, both in his own children, and others.



## CHAPTER II.

MR. HENRY was admitted student of Christ Church, March 24th, 1647–8. Soon after this, the university, which had now fallen into the hands of the Parliament, was visit-

ed by their commissioners. Almost the sole question proposed to the students was, "Will you submit to the power of the Parliament, in this present visitation?" to which all were to give their answer in writing; according to which they were displaced, or continued. Some, cheerfully complied, while others, absolutely refused. Others plead ignorance. Mr. Henry's answer was, "I submit to the power of the Parliament in the present visitation, as far as I may with a safe conscience, and without perjury." The reason of the last clause was, that he had shortly before taken the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, at his admission into the university. It is a characteristic of a conscientious man, that he fears an oath, and Mr. Henry possessed in a high degree, this reverence for the name of God, which he would by no means take in vain.

His first tutor was Mr. Underwood, who was a good scholar, and one that attended to the improvement of his pupils: but in the changes which now took place in the university, he was removed, which Mr. Henry greatly regretted. For although Mr. Finmore, who succeeded him, was able enough;

yet he was not willing to exercise his talents for the interest of those committed to his charge, towards whom he had little more than the name of a tutor. This he lamented as an unhappiness in his first setting out; but it pleased God to give him an interest in the affections of a young man, an undergraduate, but two or three years his senior, from Westminster, a Mr. Richard Bryan, who took him to be his chamber-fellow, while he continued at Oxford. He read to him, looked over his studies, and directed him in them. Similar acts of kind condescension he received from some others, in the university.

He duly performed the prescribed college exercises. He disputed, every day, in term time, wrote themes and verses, once a week, and declaimed when it came to his turn. But, in his private papers, he bewails his want of diligence, and often accuses himself of a neglect of opportunities of getting, and doing good. He appears to have had a very quick and deep sense of his own failings and infirmities; and expresses much shame, sorrow, and self-abhorrence, for the evils which he observed in himself; and cries out ear-

nestly for pardon and forgiveness, in the blood of Jesus, as if he had been the greatest of sinners. For though he was a man who walked very closely with God; yet withal he walked very humbly with him, and lived a life of repentance and self-denial. One thing to which he ascribes the loss of much time at the university, was his being sent thither so young. And he accordingly advised his friends, however their sons might be prepared, as to scholarship, not to send them too early from the school to the university; till they have discretion to govern themselves, "for," says he, "while they are children, what can be expected, but that they mind childish things?"

Another thing which rendered him less industrious than he ought to have been was, that coming from Westminster school, his attainments in classical learning were far superior to those of most of the students, and he did not feel himself pressed by the necessity of keeping pace with his class. Among the students, he tells us, there were, at that time, two classes; such as had lately come and were friends to the Parliament, who were commonly serious, but of poor scholar-

ship; the others were of the old spirit and way, enemies to the Parliament, and the reformation promoted by them. On account of their superior learning, young Henry, at first, associated principally with these, and had little or no fellowship with those of the first-mentioned class. But he soon found, that his companions were a snare to him, and took him off from the life of religion and communion with God. And he offers the most fervent thanksgiving to God for not giving him up. "For ever praised be the riches of God's free grace," says he, "that he was pleased still to keep his hold of me, and not to let me alone, when I was running from him, but set his hand again the second time, (as Isaiah has it xi. 11,) to snatch me as a brand out of the fire."

He considered his recovery from this declension in the light of a second conversion, and was always much affected with the preventing grace of God in it, and was sensible of a double bond to be for ever thankful, as well as watchful, and humble.

In the end of the year 1648, he had permission to visit his father at Whitehall, and was there the 30th of the following January,

when the king was beheaded, which awful execution he witnessed. Two things he remarked, not noticed by historians. The first, that when the blow was given, there was among the thousands who were near enough to see the tragical scene, such a dismal, universal groan, as he never heard before. The other was, that during the time of the execution, bodies of troops were marching from Charing Cross to King street; and others from King street to Charing Cross, purposely to disperse and scatter the people. Upon all occasions he testified his abhorrence of this unparalleled action; and said, that it could not be justified; and yet he did not see how it could be called a national sin; for as the king said, on the trial, not one man in ten, in the kingdom was consenting to it. Nor could it be called the sin of the Long Parliament, for at the very time when this thing was in agitation, most of them were in prison; and of those that were left only twenty-seven out of forty voted for it. But the atrocious deed was perpetrated by the dominant party in the army.

In the year 1650, Mr. Henry took his

bachelor's degree, and has recorded the goodness of God in procuring him friends, who aided him to defray the expenses, incident to the occasion.

He would often mention with thankfulness to God, what great helps he had then in the university, not only for learning, but for religion and piety. Serious godliness was in reputation; and besides the public opportunities they had, many of the scholars were used to meet together for prayer and Christian conference, to the great confirming of one another's hearts in the fear and love of God, and in preparing them for the service of the church in their generation. The university sermons which had been accustomed to be preached in the afternoon of the Lord's day, by the fellows, were now undertaken by Dr. Owen and Dr. Goodwin, who performed the service alternately.

In December 1652, he proceeded Master of Arts, and in January following preached his first sermon, at Hinckley, in Oxfordshire, on John viii. 34: "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." On this occasion, he writes, in his diary, "The Lord make use



of me as an instrument for his glory, and of his church's good, in this high and holy calling!"

Notwithstanding his deep humility and great modesty, his vigorous talents and high attainments could not be concealed; so that in 1653, he was chosen out of all the masters, to answer the questions in philosophy; and the following year, a similar honour was conferred on him. The public exercises which he was required to perform, on these occasions, gained for him a high reputation; and particularly attracted the attention of Dr. Owen, who was then the Vice-chancellor. He was heard afterwards to speak very respectfully of the performances of Mr. Henry, with whom he had then no acquaintance. A worthy divine, who was somewhat his junior in the university, informed his biographer, how much he admired these exercises of Mr. Henry, and loved him for them; and yet how much more he admired, when he became acquainted with him in the country, that so curious and polite an orator should become so profitable and powerful a preacher; and so readily lay aside the enticing

words of man's wisdom, which were so easy to him.

There is extant, a copy of some Latin verses of his in print, among the poems which the University of Oxford published, on the peace concluded with Holland, in the year 1654, which show him to have been no less a poet, than an orator.

He mentions, that some pious young men, upon leaving the university to go into the country kept a day of fasting and humiliation, on account of the sins committed by them in that place. And in the notice which he has recorded of his visits to the university, after he left it, we find this laconic but emphatic entry, "A tear dropt over my university sins."



### CHAPTER III.

His settlement at Worthenbury—His ordination to the ministry, and his exercise of it.

WORTHENBURY was a small town on the Dee, on the borders of Wales. Mr. Henry's

coming to this place was directed by the following providential indications. Mrs. Puleston, the lady of Judge Puleston, had written to a Mr. Palmer, at Oxford, to obtain for her a tutor for her sons, then preparing for college; who should also preach on the Lord's days, in the church at Worthenbury. Mr. Palmer recommended his friend, Mr. Henry, who consented to make trial of the place, for one half year, on condition that he should not be required to preach more than one sermon, on the Sabbath. Before leaving the university he had applied himself almost entirely to the study of the Holy Scriptures, and found great delight, as well as profit, in this course of study. He used often to say, "I read other books that I may be the better able to understand the Scriptures." It was a stock of Scripture knowledge with which he set up, and with that he traded to good advantage. Though he was so great a master in the eloquence of Cicero, yet he greatly preferred that of Apollos, "who was an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures." (Acts xviii. 24.) He had, indeed, a fair prospect of university preferment, but the salvation of souls was that on which his heart wa

set, to which he postponed all other interests.

In September 1653, he came to Emerald, the seat of Judge Puleston, where he was cordially received. When he passed the brook which separated Flintshire from Shropshire, nothing was further from his thoughts than a permanent residence in that strange country. Often, afterwards, when God had prospered him and built him up a house there, he would adopt the language of Jacob, and say, "With my staff, I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands."

At Emerald, he prayed in the family, was tutor to the young gentlemen, and preached once a day at Worthenbury. On one occasion the person expected to supply the pulpit the other part of the day did not come, on which occasion, he was called upon to preach unexpectedly, which service he performed so much to the satisfaction of all, that he was led to apply to himself that promise, "As thy day is, so shall thy strength be;" and made this remark, "We do not know what we can do until we have tried."

In his preaching to the people here, he studied a plain, practical style of speaking,

and would sometimes say in the pulpit, "We study so to speak, that you may understand us; and I never think I can speak plain enough, when I am speaking about souls and their salvation."

When his half year was ended, he returned to the university; not expecting to return again; but the people were very unwilling to part with him; and he received a very pious and affecting letter from lady Puleston, who was not only a person of eminent piety, but of uncommon learning. A few extracts from this letter will show her spirit, and also in what estimation the labours of Mr. Henry were held in Worthenbury.

Dear Mr. Henry:\*\*\*\* This I am sure, that having wanted a good minister of the word among us, I have oft by prayer and some tears, above five years, besought the Lord for such an one as yourself; which having obtained, I cannot yet despair, seeing he hath given us the good means, but he may give us also the good end. And this I find, that your audience is increased three for one, in the parish, and five for one, out of other places. And I have not heard of their being in the ale-house, on the Lord's day, nor

playing ball, that day, which before you came was frequent. I think I can name four or five in the parish that of formal professors, are becoming, or become real Christians. But you know all are not wrought upon at first, by the word; yet God may have reserved those that have not bowed the knee to Baal, and may call them at the latter part of the day, though not in this half year. It is a good sign, most are loth to part with you; and you have done more good in this half year than I have discerned these eighteen years. But, however, whether they will hear or forbear you have delivered your own soul. I have prayed and do pray, seeing God hath sent you, that you may be for his glory, and not for our condemnation.”

After he had again settled himself at Oxford, the lady Puleston came with her five sons, the two oldest of whom, she placed under his care in the college.

In the following vacation he visited his friends in London, and while there, received a very solemn and affectionate letter from Judge Puleston, inviting him to return, and resume his ministerial labours among them. He still retained his student's place in the

university, visiting it, once a year, to comply with the statutes; but on receiving the earnest call, just mentioned, he returned to Worthenbury, and settled there.

The living of Worthenbury was poor, and laboured under some embarrassment, on account of its connexion with the parish of Bangor, from which it had never been entirely separated. Judge Puleston, therefore, generously made a settlement on Mr. Henry, of one hundred pounds sterling, until such time as he should be promoted to some other ecclesiastical living. This sum was more than all the tithes of Worthenbury produced, and saved him from the uncertainty and perplexity of collecting the tithes.

Mr. Henry continued for some time, to reside in the Emeral family. Here he was attentive to the spiritual welfare of every member, even the meanest of the servants. He was diligent in instructing them by catechizing, by repeating sermons, and personal conversation; and he had the happiness of being countenanced by the Judge and his lady, in all his efforts to do good; yet from his private diary it appears, that even here he had his trials; for all the members of the

family were not so well affected towards him, but felt his presence to be a disagreeable restraint upon them, therefore he thought it expedient to look out for a home of his own. Which as soon as Judge Puleston perceived, he added to his former kindness and generosity, by having a convenient and handsome house built for his accommodation, in Worthenbury; and settled it on him by a lease bearing date March 6th, 1657, for threescore years, if he should continue so long minister at Worthenbury, and did not receive better preferment.

The Judge having thus generously made provision for his comfortable settlement, in the year 1659, by a writing under his own hand, collated and presented Mr. Henry to the church at Worthenbury, in which act he received the approbation of the Parliament's commissioners for the approbation of public preachers. Mr. Fogg, the rector of Bangor, at first made some opposition to his settlement, on account of the claim which Bangor had to Worthenbury, as being a part of the parish, of which he was rector; but this matter was readily settled, by his agreeing to task Mr. Fogg's leave, to occupy that station.



Before it was settled, he wrote in his diary, "I do earnestly desire that the Judge may give Mr. Fogg, all reasonable satisfaction, that there be no appearance of wrong to him." During the whole time of his residence at Worthenbury, there existed an intimate friendship between him and Mr. Fogg.

The subject of ordination now claimed his attention. The nearest class, or Presbytery, was in Bradford, Shropshire, which had been constituted by ordinance of parliament, in April, 1647. It was his desire to be ordained at Worthenbury, in the presence of the people, but the ministers were not willing to set such a precedent; and on this and other accounts, the ordination was delayed until the 16th of September, 1657. In this solemnity, every thing was conducted according to the Directory of the Assembly of Divines, and the common usage of the Presbyterians. But as his papers contain a full account of the whole proceeding, it will doubtless be gratifying to many, to have the details exhibited.

The first step taken by the Presbytery was to inquire respecting the work of grace in his heart. In answer to which he gave

a reason of the hope that was in him with meekness and fear. He said, he hoped that the spirit of grace had been dealing with him when he was young, and he hoped had discovered to him his need of Christ, and had bowed his will, in some measure, to close with him on his own terms, &c. His skill in the original languages was then tried, and he read and construed two verses in the Hebrew, and two in the Greek Testament. He was then examined in logic and natural philosophy; next in divinity, and what authors he had read, and what knowledge he had of the mediation of Jesus Christ. A trial was also made of his skill in exegesis, by propounding to him some difficult texts for his solution. His ability to resolve cases of conscience was also put to the test; and finally he was examined as to his acquaintance with church history. The examinations and trials were not concluded at this meeting of the presbytery; and they gave him as a question for a Latin thesis, "An Providentia Divina extendat se ad omnia?" On this question he exhibited his thesis, August 3d, and defended it against the objections of the members. Mr. Porter acted as moderator.

He then produced two certificates of good character, &c., the one from the university, signed by Dr. Wilkinson and Dr. Langley; the other from the ministers in his vicinity, Mr. Steel, Mr. Fogg, &c. September 16th was appointed as the day for his ordination. On the preceding Lord's day, a paper was publicly read in the church, at Worthenbury, and afterwards affixed to the church door, giving notice of the intended ordination, and signifying, "that if any person could produce any just exceptions against the life or doctrines of the said Mr. Henry, or any sufficient reason why he might not be ordained, they should certify the same to the classis, or the scribe, and it should be heard and considered."

On the day of ordination, a very great assembly was gathered together. Mr. Porter introduced the service with prayer. Mr. Parsons preached the sermon on 1 Tim. i. 12, "I thank Christ Jesus who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry." After sermon he was called upon to give a confession of his faith, which he did in the following words:

"The ground and rule of my faith towards

God, is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. I believe they were written by holy men, immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost. Having found the efficacy of them, in some measure, in my own heart, I believe they are further able to make me wise unto salvation.

“Concerning God, I believe, that he is, and that he is the rewarder of those that diligently seek him. The Trinity of the Godhead I receive and own, as a truth. I admire and adore the mystery: though no man hath seen God at any time, yet the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him, and what he hath declared concerning him, that I believe. I believe that God is a Spirit, for the Son hath said, ‘God is a Spirit.’ I believe, that he hath life in himself, and hath given to the Son to have life in himself. I believe, that all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made which was made. I believe, by his providence, he preserves, guides, and governs all the creatures, according to the purpose of his own will, to his own glory; for ‘the Father worketh hitherto, and the Son also worketh.’ I be-

lieve he made man upright after his own image and likeness, which image consisted 'in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness,' but man, by sin, lost it.

"I believe that we were all in the loins of our first parents, and that they stood and fell as public persons, and upon that account justly, without any colour of wrong, we bear our share, both in the guilt of their disobedience, and also in the corruption of nature following thereupon, so that we come into the world, children of wrath, and heirs of the curse, one as well as another; enemies to God, hating him, and hated of him; averse to all that is good, and prone to all manner of evil. Though all are born in this condition, there are some that do not die in it.

"I believe, that there is a Mediator, and but one Mediator, between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. Those whom the Father hath from everlasting pitched his love upon, and given to Christ; not because of works or faith foreseen, but merely of his free grace; for those I believe, Christ was sent into the world, made of a woman, made under the law. For their sakes he sanctified himself, and became obedient to death, even

the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and having raised him from the dead on the third day, set him at his own right hand, where he ever lives to make intercession for those for whom he shed his blood. All these elect, redeemed ones, I believe are in due time, sooner or later in their lives, effectually called, washed, sanctified, justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

“I believe, the righteousness of Christ alone, apprehended by faith, is the matter of our justification, before God; and that no flesh can stand in his sight, upon any other terms; for he is THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, and in him only is the Father well pleased.

“I believe, the work of sanctification, managed by the Spirit who dwelleth in us, though in respect of parts it is complete; for the whole man is renewed; yet in respect of degrees is not fully perfected, till we come to glory; and I believe, that all that are justified, shall be glorified; for we are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.

“I believe, the gathering in and building

up the saints, is the special end why pastors and teachers are appointed in the church; and that Jesus Christ, according to his promise, will be with them, in that work unto the end of the world.

“The two sacraments of the New Testament, baptism and the Lord’s supper, I receive and own as signs and seals of the covenant of grace: the former, instituted by our Lord Jesus as a sign and seal of our ingrafting into Christ, due of right, to all the infants of believing parents, and but once to be administered: the other instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, in the night wherein he was betrayed, to show forth his death, and to seal the benefits purchased thereby, to his church and people, and to be often repeated.

“When the body returns to the dust, I believe, the soul returns to God that gave it; and that immediately, it receives from him the sentence, according to what hath been done in the flesh; either, ‘Come, inherit the kingdom;—or, Depart, accursed into everlasting fire.’

“I believe, beside this, a day of general judgment in the end of the world, wherein,

we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ—and that our bodies being raised by an Almighty power from the dust, shall be united to the same souls again, and shall partake with them in the same condition, either of happiness or misery, to all eternity. Those that have done good, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, and those that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation.

“This,” said he, “is the sum and substance of my faith, into which I was baptized, and in which, by the grace of God, I will live and die.” Mr. Parsons, in the name and by the appointment of the presbytery, proposed certain questions to him, which with the answers, are here subjoined.

Q. 1. “What are your ends in undertaking the work and calling of a minister?”

A. “As far as upon search and inquiry, I can hitherto find, though there be that within me, that would seek great things for myself—if indeed they were to be found in this calling—yet with my mind, I seek them not. But the improvement of the talent which I have received in the service of the gospel, for the glory of God, and the salva-



tion of souls, I hope, is in my eye. If there be any thing else, I own it not. While so many seek their own, it is my desire, and shall be my endeavour, to seek the things of Jesus Christ.

Q. 2. "What are your purposes, as to diligence and industry in this calling?"

A. "I do purpose and resolve, by the help of God, to give myself wholly to these things; to prayer, reading, meditation, instant preaching in season and out of season, wherein 'I shall very gladly spend and be spent, if by any means, I may both save myself and them that hear me.' And when at any time I fail herein, I desire God by his Spirit, and my Christian friends, neighbours, and brethren, by seasonable reproof and admonition, to put me in mind of this engagement now made in the presence of this great congregation.

Q. 3. "Do you mean to be zealous and faithful in defence of truth and unity against error and schism?"

A. "I believe what the Spirit hath foretold, that in the last days, perilous times shall come, wherein men will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall

heap to themselves teachers. 'Tis my resolution, by the grace of Christ, to watch in all things; to contend earnestly for the faith, to hold fast the form of sound and wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness, in meekness, as I am able, instructing those that oppose themselves. And for peace and unity, if my heart deceive me not, I shall rather choose to hazard the loss of any thing that is most dear to me, than be any way knowingly accessory to the disturbance of these, in the churches of Christ.

Q. 4. "What is your persuasion of the truth of the reformed religion?"

A. "My persuasion is, that the Bishop of Rome is that man of sin, and son of perdition, whom the Lord Jesus will consume with the spirit of his mouth, and whom he will destroy with the brightness of his coming. And the separation which our first reformers made, I do heartily rejoice in, and bless God for; for had we still continued to partake with him in his sins, we should in the end have been partakers in his plagues.

Q. 5. "What do you intend to do when

the Lord shall alter your condition, and bring a family under your charge?

A. "When the Lord, in his providence, shall bring me into new relations, I hope he will give me grace to fill them up with duty. It is my purpose, to wait upon him and keep his way; to endeavour, in the use of means, that all that are mine may be the Lord's.

Q. 6. "Will you in humility and meekness submit to admonition and discipline?"

A. "I believe it to be a duty incumbent on all that profess the name of Christ, to watch over one another, and that when any one is overtaken in a fault, those that are spiritual are to set him in joint again, with the spirit of meekness. It shall be my endeavour, in the strength of Jesus Christ, to walk without rebuke, and when at any time I step aside (for who is there that lives and sins not?) I shall count the smitings of my brethren kindness, and their wounds faithful.

Q. 7. "What if troubles, persecutions, and discouragements arise, will you hold out to the end, notwithstanding?"

A. "Concerning this I am very jealous over my own heart, and there is cause. I

have a great want of that zeal and courage for God, which I know is required in a minister of the gospel; nevertheless, I persuade myself that no temptation shall befall me but such as is common to man, and that God who is faithful, will not suffer me to be tempted above that which I am able, but that with the temptation he will make a way also to escape, that I may be able to bear it. I promise faithfulness to the death, but I trust not at all in my promises to God, but in his to me. 'When thou goest through the fire and through the water, I will be with thee.'"

When these questions were propounded and answered, as above stated, Mr. Parsons prayed, and in prayer, he and the rest of the presbytery, viz. Messrs. Porter, Houghton, Malden, and Steel, laid their hands upon him, with words to this purpose: "Whom we do thus, in thy name, set apart to the work and office of the ministry." Five others, after a similar examination, were ordained at the same time.

The solemn service was closed by an exhortation or charge to the newly ordained ministers, by Mr. Malden, of Newport. One sentence of this charge Mr. Henry, in his

diary, says, went to his heart, "As the nurse puts the meat first into her own mouth and chews it, and then feeds the child with it, so should ministers do by the word; preach it over before hand to their own hearts; it loses none of its virtue thereby, but rather, probably, gains; as that milk nourisheth most which comes warm from the warm breast, so that sermon which comes warm from a warm heart.' Lord quicken me to do thy will in this thing!"

The classis now gave to each of the newly ordained ministers a certificate, on parchment, as a testimony unto all that they were regular ministers of the gospel, and authorized to administer the sacraments, as well as to preach the word: to which writing each of the ordaining ministers subscribed his name. Mr. Henry's appearance and manner, on that day, were so peculiarly solemn and devout, that a deep impression was made on those who were witnesses of the solemn scene.

In his diary he has the following remarks: "Methought I saw much of God in the carrying on the work of this day. O, how good is the Lord. He is good, and doth good.

The remembrance of it I shall never lose. To him be glory. I made many promises of diligence, faithfulness, &c. but I lay no stress at all on them, but on God's promise to me, that he will be with his ministers always to the end of the world, Amen, Lord, so be it. Make good thy word unto thy servant, wherein thou hast caused me to put my trust." And in another place, he says, "I did, this day, receive as much honour and work as ever I shall be able to know what to do with. Lord Jesus, proportion supplies accordingly." Two scriptures he desired might be written on his heart, "But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings." 2 Cor. vi. 4, 5. "My sons, be not now negligent: for the Lord hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and burn incense." 2 Chron. xxix. 11.

Two years afterwards, on occasion of an ordination at Whitechurch, he thus writes: "This day my ordination covenants were in a special manner renewed, as to diligence in

reading, prayer, meditation, faithfulness in preaching, admonition, catechizing, sacraments, zeal against error and profaneness, care to preserve and promote the unity and purity of the church, notwithstanding opposition and persecution, though to death. Lord, thou hast filled my hands with work, fill my heart with wisdom and grace, that I may discharge my duty to thy glory, and my own salvation, and that of those that hear me. Amen.”

Having given an account of Mr. Henry’s solemn consecration to the ministry, it will be proper to relate how he fulfilled the responsible engagements into which he now entered. And before we proceed to particular details, it may be proper to say something about the charge of Worthenbury, of which he had taken the pastoral oversight. The sphere was too narrow for such a burning and shining light. There were but forty-one communicants, in that parish, when he first administered the Lord’s supper, and this number was never doubled while he laboured there. No more convincing evidence could be desired of his unfeigned humility and low estimation of himself than the fact

that he never aspired to a larger sphere, and would never listen to any overtures of that kind, which were made to him. And his contentment with this obscure and small parish, did not arise from any desire to spare himself, or any reluctance to labour; for such was his concern for immortal souls, that he laid out himself with as much diligence and vigour here, as if he had had the oversight of the greatest and most considerable parish in the country. The greatest part of the parish were poor tenants and labouring husbandmen; "but," as he used to say, "the souls of such are as precious as the souls of the rich, and to be looked after accordingly." His labours to win souls were most abundant. Besides preaching, he expounded the Scriptures in order, catechized, and explained the catechism. He took some adults at first into the list of catechumens, and when he had taken what pains he thought needful with them, he dismissed them from further attendance, with commendation of their proficiency, and counsel to hold fast the form of sound words; to be watchful against the sins of their age, and to prepare themselves for the ordinance of the Lord's supper; and, after-



wards, he catechized none above seventeen or eighteen years of age.

He set up a monthly lecture there, of two sermons, one of which he preached himself, and the other, Mr. Ambrose Lewis of Wrexham, for some years. He also instituted and kept up a monthly conference from house to house, in which he met with the more intelligent and judicious of the parish. Here he discoursed freely with his people, respecting the things of God; which was found to contribute to their mutual edification. One object which he had in view was, to become better acquainted with his parishioners, so that he might know better how to preach to them, and pray for them, and that they might be made able and willing to pray for one another. It was also a means of increasing knowledge, love, and other graces.

He was very industrious in visiting the sick; instructing them and praying with them, and in this he would say, that he aimed not only at the good of the sick, but also of their friends and relations that were about them. He preached funeral sermons for all that were buried there, rich or poor, old or young; and even for little children; for he looked

upon it, as an opportunity of doing good. He called it the setting in the plough of the word, when Providence had softened and prepared the ground. He never would accept money for that or any other ministerial performance besides his stated salary; for which he felt himself obliged to do his duty to them, as a minister.

When he first administered the Lord's supper, he conversed freely with all who proposed to commune, and explained to them the nature of the ordinance, and the qualifications required of communicants: and gave notice to the congregation, who they were that were admitted. To which he added the following: "Concerning these and myself, I have two things to say, 1. As to what is past, we have sinned. If we should say we have not, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, and yet withal we can say, and some of us have said, with tears, we are grieved that we have sinned.

2. "We are resolved, for time to come, by God's grace, to walk in new obedience; and yet, seeing we are not angels, but men and women, compassed about with infirmities and temptations, it is possible we may fall;

but if we do, it is our declared resolution to submit to admonition and censure, according to the rule of the gospel.”

And, all along he took pains that while the weak believer should not be discouraged, the ordinance might not be profaned. He would tell those that he was necessitated to debar from the ordinance, on account of ignorance, that if they were truly willing, they might in a week's time, by the blessing of God upon a diligent use of means, reading, prayer, and conference, get such a competent measure of knowledge, as to be able to discern the Lord's body; and to those whose lives had been scandalous, that if they would come in and declare their repentance and resolutions of new obedience, they should no longer be excluded.

It will furnish the best idea of the solemnity and tenderness of his manner in administering this ordinance, to transcribe his exhortation to the communicants at his first administration, November 27th, 1659.

“Dearly beloved, in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we are met together, this day, about the most solemn, weighty service under heaven. We are come to a feast, where the

feast-maker is God the Father, the provision God the Son, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed. The guests, a company of poor sinners, unworthy such an honour. The crumbs under the table are too good for us; and yet we are permitted to taste of the provision on the table; and that which makes the feast is *heartily welcome*. God the Father bids you welcome, and ten thousand welcomes, this day, to the flesh and blood of his Son. Think you hear him saying to you, O believing soul, 'Eat, O friends, drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved.' The end of this feast is to keep in remembrance, the death of Christ, and our deliverance by it, and thereby to convey spiritual nourishment and refreshment to our souls. But withal, give me leave to ask you one question, 'What appetite have you to this feast? Are you come hungering and thirsting?' Such have the promise they shall be filled. He filleth the hungry with good things, and the rich are sent empty away. A honey comb to a full soul is no honey comb. Canst thou say as Christ said, 'with desire I have desired to eat this passover?' In this ordinance here is Christ and all his

benefits exhibited to you. Are you weak? here is bread to strengthen thee. Art thou sad? here is wine to comfort thee. What is it thou standest in need of? A pardon? here it is, sealed in blood—take it by faith as I offer it to you in the name of the Lord Jesus. Though thy sins have been as scarlet, they shall be as wool, if thou be willing and obedient. It may be here are some that have been drunkards, swearers, scoffers at godliness, Sabbath breakers, and what not? And God hath put it into your hearts to humble yourselves, to mourn for and turn from all your abominations. O come hither, here is forgiveness for you. What else is it thou wantest? O, saith the poor soul, I would have plenty of grace, more power against sin, especially my own iniquity. Why here it is for thee; from the fulness that is in Jesus Christ we receive, and grace for grace. We may say as David did ‘God hath spoken in his holiness, and then Gilead is mine and Manasseh mine; so God hath spoken in his word sealed in the sacrament, and then Christ is mine, pardon is mine, grace is mine, comfort mine, glory mine. Here I have his

bond to show for it. This is to him among you that hath engaged his heart to approach unto God this day. But if there be any come hither with a false, filthy, unbelieving, and hard heart, I do warn you seriously, and with authority, in the name of Jesus Christ, presume not to come any nearer to this sacred ordinance. You that live in the practice of any sin, or the omission of any duty against your knowledge and conscience; you that have any malice or grudge to any of your neighbours—leave your gift and go your ways—be reconciled to your brother, and then come. Better shame thyself for coming so near, than damn thyself by coming nearer. I testify to those who say they shall have peace, though they go on still in their trespasses, that there is poison in the bread. Take it, and eat it at your own peril. There is poison in the cup too—you drink your own damnation. I wash my hands from the guilt of your blood—look you to it. On the other hand, you poor penitent souls that are lost in yourselves, here is a Christ to save you. Come, O come, ye that are weary and heavy laden, &c.”

The following hints, taken from his papers, will show also his method of administering the ordinance of baptism.

“ It is a real manifestation of the goodness and love of God to believers, that he hath not only taken them into covenant with himself, but their seed also; saying, ‘ I will be thy God and the God of thy seed.’ Though to be born of such doth not necessarily entitle infants to the spiritual mercies of the covenant; for grace doth not run in the blood. We see the contrary, many times; even godly parents have wicked children. Abraham had his Ishmael and Isaac his Esau; yet it doth doubtless, entitle them to the external privileges of the covenant. The like figure unto Noah’s ark, even doth baptism also now save us. Noah and all that were his, entered into the ark, though we have cause to doubt, whether they all entered into heaven. While our Lord Jesus was here upon earth, they brought little children to him, and he laid his hands on them and blessed them; and said, ‘ Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.’ Whether:

it be meant of the visible church, often so called in the gospel, or of the state of glory in another world, either way it affords an argument for proof of infant baptism. When either parent is in covenant with God, the children also are in covenant with him, they have an undoubted right and title to this ordinance of baptism, which is the seal of the covenant. So that in the administration of this ordinance, this day, according to the institution of Jesus Christ, we look upon you, the father of this child, as a person in covenant with God. Therefore if you have dealt unfaithfully in the covenant, it is known to God, and your own conscience; but this we know, the vows of God are upon you, and, 'let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity.' But before I baptize your child, I am to acquaint you, in few words, what we require of you.

“*Quest.* Do you avouch God, in Jesus Christ, this day, to be your God?—See to it, that this be done, in truth, and with a perfect heart. You may tell us you do so, and you may deceive us, but God is not mocked.

“*Quest.* 2. And is it your desire, that



your children also may be received into covenant with the Lord, and that the Lord's broad seal of baptism, may be set to it?

“*Quest. 3.* And do you promise, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, that you will do your endeavours towards training it up in the way of godliness, that as it is by you, through mercy, that it lives the life of nature, so it may be by you also, through the same mercy, that it lives the life of grace: else, I must tell you, if you be wanting herein, there will be a sad appearance, one day, when you shall meet together, before the judgment seat of Christ, and the solemn engagement of yours will be brought to witness against you.”

He declined the private administration of the Lord's supper to sick persons, as judging it not consonant to the rule and intention of the ordinance. He very rarely, if ever, baptized in private; but would have children brought to the solemn assembly on the Lord's day, that the parents' engagement might have the more witnesses to it, and the child the more prayers put up for it; and that the congregation might be edified.

His behaviour towards the people of his

parish was very exemplary, condescending to the meanest, and conversing familiarly with them; bearing with the infirmities of the weak, and becoming "all things to all men." He was exceedingly tender of giving offence, or occasion of grief to any body, remembering that the wisdom that is from above is, "pure, peaceable, and gentle." Yet he plainly and faithfully reprov'd what he saw amiss in any, and would not suffer sin upon them; mourning also for that which he could not mend.

Many out of the neighbouring parishes attended his ministry, and some came from far, though sometimes he signified his dislike of it; so far was he from glorying in it. But they who had spiritual senses exercised to discern things that differ, would attend on that ministry which they found most edifying.

His continuance at Worthenbury, was about eight years, and his labour was not in vain in the Lord. He remarked, however, the providence, that most of those who had been savingly benefitted by his ministry, were taken out of the world, before he was removed from the place; and the new gene-

ration who succeeded them were of another spirit, *and knew not Joseph.*

From the experience which he had at Worthenbury, he was convinced of the superior opportunities of usefulness, from having his people settled contiguously around him, in the parish order, rather than the congregational way of gathering churches from places, far distant.

Though his extraordinary modesty always led him to take the lowest room, and to avoid pushing himself forward into conspicuous services; yet his eminent talents could not be hid; the ointment of the right hand will betray itself. He was often called upon by the ministers, in the vicinity, to preach the week-day lectures, which were set up plentifully, and were well attended upon in those parts; and his labours were, on these occasions, generally acceptable and successful. Indeed, the estimation in which he was held by the people, was manifest from their speaking of him commonly as, the "heavenly Henry." A person intimately acquainted with him has characterized him by the three following particulars. 1. Great piety and devotion, and a mighty savour of godliness

in all his conversation. 2. Great industry in the pursuit of useful knowledge: he was particularly observed to be inquisitive, when in company with the aged and intelligent; hearing them, and asking them questions—a good example to young men, especially young ministers. 3. Great self-denial, self-diffidence, and self-abasement. This eminent quality put a lustre upon all his other graces.

He was wont to tell a story of a forward young man, who at a meeting of ministers, with much self-confidence said, when some point was under debate, “I *hold* it so and so”—a grave and aged minister repressed his forwardness by saying, “It becomes you to *hold* your peace.”

He was not only a preacher of lectures, but a frequent hearer of the lectures of others; and he made it a practice to write down the discourses which he heard, and in his diary to record the effect which they produced on his heart.

The brother in whom he most delighted, and with whom he often took sweet counsel, was Mr. Richard Steel, minister of Flanmers, a parish adjacent to Worthenbury, whose

praise is in the churches, for his excellent treatises, "The Husbandman's Calling"—"An Antidote against Distractions"—and several others. He was Mr. Henry's *other-self*, the man of his counsel, and with whom he was frequently joined in conference, and in the observance of days of humiliation and prayer.

It was customary for the ministers in that part of the country, after the public exercises of the lecture were over, to spend some time in set disputations, in Latin. As iron sharpens iron, so these ministers made it their business to provoke one another to love and good works.

In the early part of his ministry, Mr. Henry's health was so feeble, that it was feared that he would go into a decline, and some blamed him for taking so much pains in his ministerial work; suggesting to him, "Master spare thyself." One of them told him, that he lighted up his whole pound of candles at once, and that he could not hold out long, at that rate, and wished him to husband his strength better. But he often reflected upon it with comfort, afterwards, that he was not influenced by such sugges-

tions. He would sometimes say, "the more we do in the service of God, the more we may do." When his work bore more than usually hard upon him, instead of complaining, he would say, "Thou knowest, Lord, how well contented I am 'to spend and be spent,' in thy service; and if the outward man decay, O let the inward man be renewed." When his bodily indisposition increased, his greatest solicitude, was, to make a proper improvement of the dispensation; for he said, "it is a great loss to lose an affliction." And he considered every return of disease, as a summons to the grave. "I find," said he, "my earthly tabernacle tottering, and when it is taken down, I shall have a building in heaven, that shall never fail. Blessed be God the Father, and my Lord Jesus Christ, and the good Spirit of grace." Amen.

While he resided at Worthenbury, he constantly laid up one tenth of his means for the poor, which he carefully and faithfully disposed of in the liberal things which he devised; especially, in the teaching of poor children. And he recommended it as a good rule, to lay by for charity, in some propor-

tion as our circumstances are, and then it will be the easier to lay out in charity. We shall be more likely to seek for opportunities of doing good, when we have money lying by us, for which we have said, "This is not our own, but the poor's." To encourage himself and others to works of charity, he would say, "He is no fool, who parts with that which he cannot keep, when he is sure to be recompensed by that which he cannot lose." But to exclude all boasting, he would often use the words of David, "Of thine own hand, have we given thee."

In the year 1658, the ministers in Mr. Henry's vicinity began to enlarge their correspondence with those of North Wales. Several meetings were held for the promotion of unity, love, and good understanding among themselves, by entering into an association, similar to what had some years before existed in Cumberland and Worcester. And though they differed considerably respecting matters of church government, some being Episcopal, some Presbyterian, and some Congregational in their views; yet they agreed to lay aside the thoughts of matters in variance, and to give each other the right

hand of fellowship; that with one shoulder and one consent, they might study in their respective places, to promote the common interests of Christ's kingdom, and the common salvation of precious souls.

He remarked that the year after the death of Oliver Cromwell, there was generally a great change throughout the nation, in the temper of God's people, and a mighty tendency towards peace and unity; as if by consent, they were weary of their long clashings. With this prospect, he was much delighted, and entertained the pleasing hopes, that the time was at hand, "when Judah should no longer vex Ephraim, nor Ephraim envy Judah; neither should they learn war any more." And although the bright prospect was soon obscured; yet he often spoke of the experience of that and the following year, as a specimen of what may yet be expected, when the Spirit shall be poured out upon us from on high. From this experience also, he gathered this observation: "That it is not so much our difference of opinion that doth the mischief—for we may as soon expect all the clocks in the town to strike together, as to see all good people of a mind in



every thing, on this side heaven—but the mismanagement of that difference.”

In the association of ministers, now formed, he was appointed to draw up that part of their agreement which related to the worship of God, which task he performed to their satisfaction. In his introduction to this paper, he says, “Though the main of our desires and endeavours be after unity, in the greater things of God; yet we judge uniformity in the circumstances of worship, a thing not to be altogether neglected by us: not only in respect to that influence, which external, visible order hath upon the beauty and comeliness of the churches of Christ, but also as it hath a direct tendency to the strengthening of our hands in ministerial services, and withal to the removing of those prejudices which many people have conceived even against religion and worship itself. We bless God from our very souls, for that whereunto we have already attained; and yet we hope something further may be done, in reference to our walking more closely by the same rule, and minding the same things. The word of God is the rule which we desire and resolve to walk by in the administration of ordinances; and for

those things wherein the word is silent, we think we may and ought to have recourse to Christian prudence, and the practice of the reformed churches, agreeing with the general rules of the word; and therefore we have had—as we think we ought—a special eye to the DIRECTORY, in our present agreement.”

There was the more reason to hope for good fruit from these associations, because they were set up with prayer and days of fasting and humiliation, to implore the Divine blessing, to seek God for direction in their ministerial work, and to bewail their ministerial failings.

September 29, 1658, the lady Puleston died. “She was,” says he, “the best friend I ever had upon earth, but my best friend in heaven, is still where he was, and he will never leave me nor forsake me.” He preached her funeral sermon, from Isa. iii. “Cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils.” Among her last words he mentions these, “My soul leans to Jesus Christ, lean to me, sweet Saviour.”

After a year, Judge Puleston died, and all Mr. Henry’s interest in the Emeral family was buried in the grave. He preached the

Judge's funeral sermon from Nehemiah xiii. 4. "Wipe not out the good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and the offices thereof." This sermon was not intended as a eulogy on the Judge, there is not a word in the sermon to that purpose; but the object was to show, that deeds done for the house of God, are good deeds and to press upon the people according to their opportunity, to do such deeds. There is one fact mentioned in that discourse, which deserves to be preserved. That it had been for several years the practice of a worthy gentleman, in a neighbouring county, in renewing his leases, instead of making it a condition that his tenants should keep a hawk or a dog for him, to require them to keep a Bible in their houses, and to bring up their children to learn to read, and be catechized.

The personal affronts which he received from some members of that family, at that time need not be mentioned; but with what exemplary meekness he bore them, ought not to be forgotten.

He was very much solicited in 1659, to leave Worthenbury and accept the vicarage of Wrexham, a place where the people were

greatly attached to him, and for whom he felt a special kindness; but he could not see his way clear to leave Worthenbury; and so he declined the invitation.

As to his method of preaching, it was not his practice to dwell long on a single text; a thing common in his time and before. "Better," said he, "one sermon on many texts, than many sermons on one text." He used to preach systematically, that is, he pursued a regular method, and linked his subjects in a sort of chain. He adapted his method and style to the capacity of his hearers, fetching his similitudes or illustrations, from those things which were familiar to them. He did not shoot the arrow of the word over their heads, in high notions, or the flourishes of affected rhetoric; nor under their feet, by blunt and homely expressions, as many do, under pretence of plainness, but to their hearts, in close and lively applications. His delivery was very graceful and agreeable, far from being noisy and precipitate, on the one hand, or dull and slow on the other. His doctrine did drop as the dew and distill as the rain, and came with a charming pleasing power, such as many bore witness to, who

wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. He wrote the notes of his sermons pretty large, for the most part, and always very legible; but even when he had put his last hand to them, he left many imperfect hints, which gave room for enlargement in preaching, in which he had great felicity. And he would often advise ministers, not to confine themselves too closely to their notes, but having well digested the matter before, to allow themselves a liberty of expression, such as a man's feelings, if they be excited, will be apt to furnish him with. But for this no certain rule can be given, there are diversities of gifts, and each to profit withal.

He kept his sermon notes in very neat and exact order; so that he could readily turn to any of them; yet he seldom preached again any of his old sermons, but to the last studied new sermons, and wrote them as elaborately as ever, for he thought a sermon best preached, when it was newly meditated. Even when he preached again on the same text, he was accustomed to write a new sermon. He never offered to God that which cost him nothing.

When he went to Oxford, and preached before the university in Christ's-church, as he did several times, his labours were not only very acceptable, but successful, too; particularly, a sermon on Proverbs xiv. 9. "Fools make a mock at sin," which made such an impression on a young master of arts, that he afterwards came to his chamber to return him his thanks, for the good received from his preaching.

In his diary, during this period, he notes carefully the frame of his mind while composing as well as preaching his sermons. And he appears to have had, at times, not only humbling views of his own imperfections, but some doubts respecting the goodness of his state. In one entry, he says, "I think, never did any poor creature pass through such a mixture of hope and fear, joy and sadness, assurance and doubting—down and up, as I have, these years past." It may be encouraging to drooping Christians to hear from such an eminent saint, such complaints as the following: "No life at all in the duty—many wanderings. If my prayers were written down and my vain thoughts interlined, what incoherent

nonsense would there be! I am ashamed, Lord, I am ashamed, O pity and pardon me.” “When a fire is first kindled,” saith he, “there is a deal of smoke and smother, that afterwards wears away; so in young converts, much peevishness, forwardness, and darkness; so it hath been with my soul, and so it is yet in a great measure. Lord, pity, and do not quench the smoking flax; though as yet it do but smoke, let these sparks be blown up into a flame.” And though few excelled him in profitable conversation; yet he often bewails his barrenness, and unprofitableness. “Little good done, or gotten, such a day, for want of a heart. ’Tis my sin and shame. O that I had wings like a dove.” Yet he often expresses in his diary, a firm reliance on God. “Such a day,” saith he, a full resignation was made of all my concerns, into the hands of my heavenly Father, let him deal with me as seemeth good in his eyes. I am learning and labouring to live by faith. Lord, help my unbelief.” At a time when perplexed and almost overwhelmed with fears, he found complete deliverance, by the suggestions of a precious

text of Scripture "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer."

He very frequently kept days of fasting and humiliation in secret, which he calls his days of atonement. Sometimes he observed these monthly, and sometimes only on particular occasions; but his diary, while at Worthenbury, shows what sweet communion he had with God, in these solemn duties.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

His Marriage—Family—Family Religion, and the Education of his Children.

HE removed from Emeral to the house in Worthenbury which the Judge had built for him in February 1658-9, and then had one of his sisters with him to keep his house. No sooner had he a tent, but God had an altar in it, and that a smoking altar. There he set up repetition on Sabbath evenings, and welcomed his neighbours to it.

His Christian friends often, and sometimes his brethren in the ministry, kept days of fasting and prayer at his house. He used to



tell people when they had built new houses, they must dedicate them, (referring to Deut. xx. 5, and Psal. xxx. ult.) that is, they must invite God to their houses, and devote them to his service.

Providence having thus brought him into a house of his own, soon after provided him a help-meet for him. After long agitation, and some discouragement and opposition from the father, April 26th, 1660, he married Katharine, the only daughter and heir of Mr. Daniel Matthews, of Broad Oak, in the township of Iscoyd, in Flintshire, (but in the parish of Malpas, which is in Cheshire, and about two miles distant from Whitchurch, a considerable market town in Shropshire.) Mr. Matthews was a gentleman of a very competent estate; such a one as king James the First used to say was the happiest lot of all others, which set a man below the office of a justice of peace, and above that of a petty constable. This was his only child: very fair and honourable overtures had been made for her disposal; but it pleased God so to order events, and to over-rule the spirits of those concerned, that she was reserved to be a blessing to this good man,

in things pertaining “both to life and godliness.”

His purpose of marriage was published in the church three Lord’s days before; a laudable practice, which he greatly approved, and persuaded others to.

The day before his marriage, he kept as a day of secret prayer and fasting.

He used to say, those who would have comfort in that change of their condition, must see to it, that they bring none of the guilt of the sin of their single state with them into the married state. And the presence of Christ at a “wedding will turn the water into wine;” and he will come, if he be invited by prayer.

He took all occasions, while he lived, to express his thankfulness to God for the great comfort he had in this relation. A day of mercy (so he writes on his marriage day) never to be forgotten. God had given him one (as he writes afterwards) every way his helper, in whom he had much comfort, and for whom he thanked God with all his heart. He writes in his diary, April 26th, 1680, “This day we have been married twenty years, in which time we have received of the

Lord more than twenty thousand mercies; to God be glory." Sometimes he writes, "We have been so long married, and never reconciled;" that is, there never was any occasion for it. His usual prayer for his friends in the married state was according to his own practice in that state; that they might be mutually serviceable to each other's faith and holiness, and jointly serviceable to God's honour and glory.

Her father, though he put some hardships upon him in the terms, and had been somewhat averse to the match, yet by Mr. Henry's great prudence, and God's good providence, he was influenced to give a free consent to it; and he himself, with his own hand, gave her in marriage. From this, as from other experiences, Mr. Henry had learned to say with assurance: "It is not in vain to wait upon God, and to keep his way." Mr. Matthews settled part of his estate before marriage upon them and theirs; he lived about seven years after; and when he died, the remainder of it came to them. This competent estate, which the divine providence brought into his hand, was not only a comfortable support to him when he was

turned out of his living, and when many faithful ministers of Christ were reduced to great poverty and straits; but it enabled him likewise, as he had opportunity, to preach the gospel freely, which he did to his dying day; and not only so, but to give for the relief of others that were in want, in which he sowed plentifully, to a very large proportion of his income; and often blessed God that he had wherewithal, remembering the words of the Lord, how he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Such was his house, and such the vine which God graciously planted by the side of his house. By her God gave him six children, all born within less than eight years; the two eldest sons, John and Matthew: the other four, daughters, Sarah, Katharine, Eleanor, and Ann. His eldest son John died of the measles in the sixth year of his age, and the rest were in mercy continued to him.

The Lord having built him up into a family, he was careful and faithful in making good his solemn vow at his ordination, that "he and his house would serve the Lord." He would often say, That we are really which we are relatively. It is not so much

what we are at church, as what we are in our families. Religion in the power of it will be family religion. In this his practice was very exemplary; he was one that walked before his house in a perfect way, with a perfect heart, and therein behaved himself wisely. His constant care and prudent endeavour was not only to put away iniquity far from his tabernacle, but that where he dwelt, the word of Christ might dwell richly. If he might have no other church, yet he had a church in his house.

He made conscience of closet-worship, and did abound in it, not making his family worship to excuse for that. He hath this affecting note in his diary, upon the removing of his closet but from one room in the house to another: this day (saith he) my new closet was consecrated, if I may so say, with this prayer, "That all the prayers that ever should be made in it, according to the will of God, morning, evening, and at noon-day, ordinary or extraordinary, might be accepted of God, and obtain a gracious answer. Amen and amen." It was the caution and advice which he frequently gave to his children and friends, Be sure you look to your secret duty, keep

that up whatever you do; the soul cannot prosper in the neglect of it. He observed, that apostasy generally begins at the closet door. Secret prayer is first neglected, and carelessly performed, then frequently omitted, and after a while wholly cast off; and then farewell God, and Christ, and all religion.

He also advised that secret duty be performed secretly, which was the admonition he gave sometimes to those who caused their voice to be heard on high in that duty.

Besides this, he and his wife constantly prayed together morning and evening; and never if they were together at home or abroad was it intermitted; and from his own experience of the benefit of this practice, he would take all opportunities to recommend it to those in that relation, as conducing very much to the comfort of it, and to their furtherance in that, which he would often say is the great duty of yoke-fellows; and that is, to do all they can to help one another to heaven. He would say, that this duty of husbands and wives praying together, is intimated in that of the apostle, 1 Pet. iii. 7. where they are exhorted to "live as heirs together of the grace of life, that their prayers,

(especially their prayers together) be not hindered;" and that nothing may be done to hinder them from praying together, nor to hinder them in it, nor to spoil the success of those prayers. This sanctifies the relation, and fetcheth in a blessing upon it, makes the comforts of it the more sweet, and the cares and crosses of it the more easy, and is an excellent means of preserving and increasing love in the relation. Many to whom he hath recommended the practice of this duty, have blessed God for him, and for his advice concerning it. When he was abroad and lay with any of his friends he would remind them of this rule, That they who lie together must pray together. In the performance of this part of his daily worship he was usually short, but often much affected.

Besides these he made conscience, and made a business of family worship in all the parts of it; and in it he was uniform, steady, and constant from the time that he was first called to the charge of a family, to his dying day; and according to his own practice, he took all occasions to press it upon others. His doctrine once from Josh. xxiv. 15, was, That family worship is family duty. He

would say sometimes, If the worship of God be not in the house, write, "Lord have mercy on us," upon the door; for there is a plague, a curse in it. It is the judgment of archbishop Tillotson, in that excellent book which he published a little before his death upon this subject: "That constant family worship is so necessary to keep alive a sense of God and religion in the minds of men, that he sees not how any family that neglects it can in reason be esteemed a family of Christians, or indeed to have any religion at all. How earnestly would Mr. Henry reason with people sometimes about this matter, and tell what a blessing it would bring upon them and their houses, and all that they had. He that makes his house a little church shall find, that God will make it a little sanctuary. It may be of use to give a particular account of his practice in this matter, because it was very exemplary. As to the time of it, his rule was, commonly the earlier the better, both morning and evening; in the morning before worldly business crowded in, "early will I seek thee:" he that is the first would have the first; nor is it fit that the worship of God should stand by and wait while the



world's turn is served. And early in the evening, before the children and servants began to be sleepy; and therefore, if it might be, he would have prayer at night before supper, that the body might be the more fit to serve the soul in that service of God. And indeed he did industriously contrive all the circumstances of his family worship, so as to make it most solemn and most likely to answer the end. He always made it the business of every day, and not (as too many make it) a by-business. This being his fixed principle, all other affairs must be sure to give way to this. And he would tell those who objected against family worship, that they could not get time for it, that if they would put on Christian resolution at first, they would not find the difficulty so great as they imagined; but after a while, their other affairs would fall in easily and naturally with this, especially where there is that wisdom which is profitable to direct; nay, they would find it to be a great preserver of order and decency in a family, and it would be like a hem to all their other business, to keep it from ravelling. He was ever careful to have all his family present at family worship:

though sometimes, living in the country, he had a great household; yet he would have not only his children and sojourners (if he had any) and domestic servants, but his workmen and day-labourers, and all that were employed for him, if they were within call to be present, to join with him in this service; and as it was an act of his charity many times to set them to work for him, so to that he added this act of piety, to set them to work for God. And usually when he paid his workmen their wages, he gave them some good counsel about their souls: yet if any that should come to family worship were at a distance, and must be staid for long, he would rather want them than put the duty much out of time; and would sometimes say at night, "Better one away than all sleepy."

The performances of his family worship were the same morning and evening. He observed, that under the law, the morning and the evening lamb had the same meat-offering and drink-offering, Exod. xxix. 38—41. He always begun with a short, but very solemn prayer, imploring the Divine presence and grace, assistance and acceptance:

particularly begging a blessing upon the word to be read, in reference to which he often put up this petition: "That the same Spirit that indited the Scripture, would enable us to understand the Scripture, and to make up something to ourselves out of it that may do us good:" and esteeming the word of God as his necessary food, he would sometimes pray in a morning, that "our souls might have a good meal out of it," he commonly concluded even this short prayer, as he did also his blessings before and after meat, with a doxology, as Paul upon all occasions, "To Him be glory," &c. which is properly adoration, and is an essential part of prayer.

He next sung a psalm, and commonly he sung David's psalms in order, throughout; sometimes using the old translation, but generally Mr. Barton's: and his usual way was to sing a whole psalm throughout, though perhaps a long one, and to sing quick; (yet with a good variety of proper and pleasant tunes) and that he might do so, usually the psalm was sung without reading the line betwixt (every one in the family having a book;) which he preferred much before the common way of singing where it might con-

veniently be done, as more agreeable to the practice of the primitive church, and the reformed churches abroad; and by this means he thought the duty more likely to be performed “in the spirit, and with the understanding;” the sense being not so broken, nor the affections interrupted, as in reading the line betwixt. He would say, that a Scripture ground for singing psalms in families might be taken from Psalm cxviii. 15. “The voice of rejoicing and of salvation, is in the tabernacles of the righteous;” and that it is a way to hold forth godliness (like Rahab’s scarlet thread, Josh. ii. 17,) to such as pass by our windows.

He next read a portion of Scripture, taking the Bible in order; he would sometimes blame those who only pray in their families, and do not read the Scripture: in prayer we speak to God, by the word he speaks to us; and is there any reason (saith he) that we should speak all? in the tabernacle the priests were every day to burn incense, and to light the lamps; the former figuring the duty of prayer, the latter the duty of reading the word. Sometimes he would say, Those do well that pray morning and evening in their

families; those do better, that pray and read the Scriptures; but those do best of all that pray, and read, and sing psalms; and Christians should covet earnestly the best gifts.

He advised the reading of the Scripture in order; for though one star in the firmament of the Scripture differ from another star in glory, yet wherever God hath a mouth to speak, we should have an ear to hear; and the diligent searcher may find much excellent matter in those parts of Scripture, which we are sometimes tempted to think might have been spared. How affectionately would he sometimes bless God for every book, and chapter, and verse, and line, in the Bible!

What he read in his family, he always expounded; and exhorted all ministers to do so, as an excellent means of increasing their acquaintance with the Scripture. His expositions were not so much critical as plain, and practical, and useful; and such as tended to edification, and to answer the end for which the Scriptures were written, which is to make us wise to salvation. And herein he had a peculiar excellence, performing that daily exercise with so much judgment, and at the same time with such facility and clearness, as if

every exposition had been premeditated; and very instructive they were, as well as affecting to the auditors. His observations were many times very pretty and surprising, and such as one shall not ordinarily meet with. Commonly in his expositions he reduced the matter of the chapter or psalm read, to some heads; not by a logical analysis, which often minceth it too small and confounds the sense with the terms; but by such a distribution as the matter did most easily and unforcedly fall into. He often mentioned that saying of Tertulian's, "I adore the fulness of the Scriptures;" and sometimes that, *Scriptura semper habet aliquid relegentibus*. When sometimes he had hit upon some useful observation that was new to him, he would say afterwards to those about him, "How often have I read this chapter, and never before now took notice of such a thing in it!" he put his children, while they were with him, to write these expositions; and when they were gone from him, the strangers that sojourned with him did the same. What collections his children had, though but broken and very imperfect hints; yet, when afterwards they were disposed of in the world, were of good

use to them and their families. Some expositions of this nature, that is, plain and practical, and helping to raise the affections and guide the conversation by the word, he often wished were published by some good hand for the benefit of families: but such was his great modesty and self diffidence (though few more able for it) that he would never be persuaded to attempt any thing of that kind himself. As an evidence how much his heart was upon it, to have the word of God read and understood in families, take this passage out of his last will and testament: "I give and bequeath to each of my four daughters, Mr. Pool's English annotations upon the Bible, in two volumes, of the last and best edition that shall be to be had at the time of my decease, together with Mr. Barton's last and best translation of the singing psalms, one to each of them; requiring and requesting them to make daily use of the same, for the instruction, edification, and comfort of themselves and their families." But 'tis time we proceed to the method of his family worship.

The chapter or psalm being read and expounded, he required from his children some

account of what they could remember of it; and sometimes would discourse with them plainly and familiarly about it, that he might lead them into an acquaintance with it; and (if it might be) impress something of it upon their hearts.

He then prayed, and always kneeling, which he looked upon as the fittest and most proper gesture for prayer; and he took care that his family should address themselves to the duty with the outward expressions of reverence and composedness. He usually fetched his matter and expressions in prayer, from the chapter that was read, and the psalm that was sung, which was often very affecting, and helped much to stir up and excite praying graces. He sometimes observed in those psalms, where reference is had to the Scripture stories, as Psalm lxxxiii. and many others, that those who are well acquainted with the Scriptures, would not need to make use of the help of prescribed forms, which are very necessary for those that cannot do the duty without them, but are unbecoming those that can; as a go-cart is needful to a child, or crutches to one that is lame, but neither of them agreeable to one that needs



them not: 'twas the comparison he commonly used in this matter. In family prayer he was usually most full in giving thanks for family mercies, confessing family sins, and begging family blessings. Very particular he would sometimes be in prayer for his family; if any were absent, they were sure to have an express petition put up for them. He used to observe concerning Job. i. 5, that he offered burnt offerings for his children, according to the number of them all, an offering for each child; and so would he sometimes in praying for children, put up a petition for each child. He was observed at the annual return of the birth-day of each of his children to bless God for his mercy to him and his wife in that child; the giving of it, the continuance of it, the comfort they had in it, &c. with some special request to God for that child. Every servant and sojourner, at their coming into his family and their going out (besides the daily remembrances of them) had a particular petition put up for them, according as their circumstances were. The strangers that were at any time within his gates, he was wont particularly to recom-

mend to God in prayer, with much affection, and Christian concern for them and their concernments. He was daily mindful of those that desired his prayers for them, and would say sometimes, It is a great comfort that God knows who we mean in prayer, though we do not name them. Particular providences concerning the country, as to health or sickness, good or bad weather, or the like, he commonly took notice of in prayer, as there was occasion; and would often beg of God to fit us for the next providence, whatever it might be: nor did he ever forget to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. He always concluded family prayer, both morning and evening, with a solemn benediction, after the doxology; "the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be with us," &c. Thus did he daily bless his household.

Immediately after the prayer was ended, his children together, with bended knee, asked blessing of him and their mother; that is, desired of them to pray to God to bless them: which blessing was given with great solemnity and affection; and if any of them

were absent, they were remembered, "the Lord bless you and your brother," or "you and your sister that is absent."

This was his daily worship, which he never altered, (unless as is aftermentioned) nor ever omitted any part of, though he went from home ever so early, or returned ever so late, or had ever so much business for his servants to do. He would say that sometimes he saw cause to shorten them; but he would never omit any; for if an excuse be once admitted for an omission, it will be often returning. He was not willing (unless the necessity were urgent) that any should go from his house in a morning before family worship; but upon such an occasion would remind his friends, that "Prayer and provender never hinder a journey."

He managed his daily family worship so as to make it a pleasure and not a task to his children and servants; for he was seldom long, and never tedious in the service; the variety of the duties made it the more pleasant; so that none who joined with him had ever any reason to say, Behold what a weariness is it! Such an excellent faculty he had of rendering religion the most sweet and amiable employ-

ment in the world; and so careful was he (like Jacob) "to drive as the children could go," not putting "new wine into old bottles." If some good people that mean well would do likewise, it might prevent many of those prejudices which young persons are apt to conceive against religion, when the services of it are made a toil and a terror to them.

On Thursday evenings (instead of reading) he catechised his children and servants in the Assembly's Catechism, with the proofs, or sometimes in a little catechism, concerning the matter of prayer, published in the year 1674, and said to be written by Dr. Collins, which they learned for their help in the gift of prayer, and he explained it to them. Or they read, and he examined them in some other useful book, as Mr. Pool's Dialogues against the Papists, the Assembly's Confession of Faith with the Scriptures, or the like.

On Saturday evenings, his children and servants gave him an account of what they could remember of the chapters that had been expounded all the week before, in order, each a several part, helping one another's memories for the recollecting of it. This he called, "gathering up the fragments which

remained, that nothing might be lost." He would say to them sometimes as Christ to his disciples, "Have ye understood all these things?" If not, he took that occasion to explain them more fully. This exercise (which he constantly kept up all along) was both delightful and profitable, and being managed by him with so much prudence and sweetness, helped to instill into those about him betimes, the knowledge and love of the holy Scriptures.

When he had sojourners in his family, who were able to bear a part in such a service, he had commonly, in the winter time, set weekly conferences, on questions proposed, for their mutual edification and comfort in the fear of God; the substance of what was said, he himself took and kept an account of in writing.

But the Lord's day he called and counted the queen of days, the pearl of the week, and observed it accordingly. The fourth commandment intimates a special regard to be had to the Sabbath in families, "thou, and thy son, and thy daughter," &c. it is "the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings." In this therefore he was very exact, and

abounded in the work of the Lord in his family on that day. Whatever were the circumstances of his public opportunities, (which varied as we shall find afterwards) his family religion on that day was the same: extraordinary sacrifices must never supercede the continual burnt-offering and his meat-offering, Numb. xxviii. 15. His common salutation of his family or friends, on the Lord's day in the morning, was that of the primitive Christians: "the Lord is risen, he is risen indeed;" making it his chief business on that day, to celebrate the memory of Christ's resurrection; and he would say sometimes, "Every Lord's day is a true Christian's Easter day." He took care to have his family ready early on that day, and was larger in exposition and prayer on Sabbath mornings than on other days. He would often remember, that under the law the daily sacrifice was doubled on Sabbath days, two lambs in the morning, and two in the evening. He had always a particular subject for his expositions on Sabbath mornings; the harmony of the Evangelists several times over, the Scripture prayers, Old Testament prophecies of Christ, "Christ the true treasure" (so he en-

titled that subject,) “sought and found in the field of the Old Testament.” He constantly sung a psalm after dinner, and another after supper, on the Lord’s days. And in the evening of the day his children and servants were catechised and examined in the sense and meaning of the answers in the catechism; that they might not say it (as he used to tell them) like a parrot, by rote. Then the day’s sermons were repeated, commonly by one of his children, when they were grown up, and while they were with him; and the family gave an account of what they could remember of the word of the day, which he endeavoured to fasten upon them, as a nail in a sure place. In his prayers on the evening of the Sabbath, he was often more than ordinarily enlarged; as one that found not only God’s service perfect freedom, but his work its own wages, and a great reward; not only after keeping, but (as he used to observe from Psal. xix. 11,) in keeping God’s commandments. A present reward of obedience in obedience. In that prayer he was usually very particular, in praying for his family and all that belonged to it. It was a prayer he often put up that, that we might have

grace to carry it “as a minister, and a minister’s wife, and a minister’s children, and a minister’s servants should carry it, that the ministry might in nothing be blamed.” He would sometimes be a particular intercessor for the towns and parishes adjacent: how have I heard him when he hath been in the mount with God, in a Sabbath evening prayer, wrestle with the Lord for Chester, and Shrewsbury, and Nantwich, and Wrexham, and Whitchurch, &c. those nests of souls, wherein there are so many, that cannot discern between their right hand and their left in spiritual things. He closed his Sabbath work in his family with singing Psalm cxxxiv. and after it a solemn blessing of his family.

Thus was he prophet and priest in his own house; and he was king there too, ruling in the fear of God, and not suffering sin upon any under his roof.

He had many years ago a man-servant that was once overtaken in drink abroad; for which, the next morning at family worship he solemnly reprov'd him, admonish'd him, and pray'd for him with a spirit of meekness, and soon after parted with him. But



there were many that were his servants, who, by the blessing of God upon his endeavours, got those good impressions upon their souls which they retained ever after; and blessed God with all their hearts that ever they came under his roof. Few went from his service till they were married, and went to families of their own; and some after they had been married and buried their yoke-fellows, returned to his service again, saying, "Master it is good to be here."

He brought up his children in the fear of God, with a great deal of care and tenderness, and did by his practice, as well as upon all occasions in discourses, condemn the indiscretion of those parents who are partial in their affections to their children, making a difference between them, which he observed did often prove of ill consequence in families; and lay a foundation of envy, contempt, and discord, which turns to their shame and ruin. His carriage towards his children was with great mildness and gentleness, as one who desired rather to be loved than feared by them. He was as careful not to provoke them to wrath, nor to discourage them, as he was to bring them up in the nurture and ad-

monition of the Lord. He ruled indeed, and kept up his authority, but it was with wisdom and love and not with a high hand. He allowed his children a great degree of freedom with him, which gave him the opportunity of reasoning them, not frightening them into that which is good. He did much towards the instruction of his children in the way of familiar discourse, according to that excellent directory for religious education, Deut. vi. 7. Thou shalt whet these things (so the word is, which he said noted frequent repetition of the same things) upon thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, &c. which made them love home and delight in his company, and greatly endeared religion to them.

He did not burthen his children's memories by imposing upon them the getting of chapters and psalms without book; but endeavoured to make the whole word of God familiar to them, (especially the Scripture stories) and to bring them to understand it and love it, and then they would easily remember it. He used to observe from Psal. cxix. 93; "I will never forget thy precepts, for with them thou hast quickened me;" that

we are then likely to remember the word of God when it doth us good.

He taught all his children to write himself, and set them betimes to write sermons and other things that might be of use to them. He taught his eldest daughter the Hebrew tongue when she was about six or seven years old, by an English Hebrew grammar, which he made on purpose for her: and she went so far in it, as to be able readily to read and construe a Hebrew psalm.

He drew up a short form of the baptismal covenant, for the use of his children; it was this:

“I take God the Father to be my chiefest good and highest end.

I take God the Son to be my Prince and Saviour.

I take God the Holy Ghost to be my sanctifier, teacher, guide, and comforter.

I take the word of God to be my rule in all my actions.

And the people of God to be my people in all conditions.

I do likewise devote and dedicate unto the

Lord, my whole self, all I am, all I have, and all I can do.

And this I do deliberately, sincerely, freely, and for ever.”

This he taught his children, and they each of them solemnly repeated it every Lord's day in the evening, after they were catechised, he putting his Amen to it, and sometimes adding, “so say, and so do, and you are made for ever.”

He also took pains with them, to lead them into the understanding of it, and to persuade them to a free and cheerful consent to it. And when they grew up, he made them all write it over severally with their own hands, and very solemnly set their names to it, which he told them he would keep by him, and it should be produced as a testimony against them, in case they should afterwards depart from God, and turn from following after him.

He was careful to bring his children sometimes (when they were about sixteen years of age) to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, to take the covenant of God upon them-

selves, and to make their dedication to God their own act and deed; and a great deal of pains he took with them, to prepare them for that great ordinance, and so to transmit them into the state of adult church-membership. And he would often blame parents, who would think themselves undone if they had not their children baptized, and yet took no care when they grew up and made a profession of the Christian religion, to persuade them to the Lord's Supper. 'Tis true (he would say) buds and blossoms are not fruit, but they give hopes of fruit, and parents may and should take hold of the good beginnings of grace which they see in their children, by those who bind them so much the closer to and lead them so much the faster, in the way that is called holy. By this solemn engagement the door which stood half open before, and invited the thief, is shut and bolted against temptation. And to those who pleaded that they were not fit, he would say, that the further they went into the world, the less fit they would be. *Qui non est hodie cras minus aptus erit.* Not that children should be compelled to it, nor those that are wilfully ignorant, untoward, and perverse, admitted

to it; but those children that are hopeful and well inclined to the things of God, and appear to be concerned in other duties of religion, when they begin to put away childish things, should be incited, and encouraged, and persuaded to this, that the matter may be brought to an issue. "Nay, but we will serve the Lord;" fast bind, fast find. Abundant thanksgivings have been rendered to God by many of his friends for his advice and assistance herein.

In dealing with his children about their spiritual state, he took hold of them very much by the handle of their infant baptism, and frequently inculcated that upon them, that they were born in God's house, and were betimes dedicated and given up to him, and therefore were obliged to be his servants, Psal. cxvi. 16, I am thy servant, because the the son of thy handmaid. This he was wont to illustrate to them by the comparison of taking a lease of a fair estate for a child in the cradle, and putting his life into it; the child then knows nothing of the matter, nor is he capable of consenting; however, then he is maintained out of it, and hath an interest in it; and when he grows up and becomes

able to choose, and refuse for himself, if he go to his landlord, and claim the benefit of the lease, and promise to pay the rent, and do the services, well and good, he hath the benefit of it, if otherwise, it is at his peril. "Now, children, (would he say) our great Landlord was willing that your lives should be put into the lease of heaven and happiness, and it was done accordingly, by your baptism, which is the seal of the righteousness that is by faith; and by that it was assured to you, that if you would pay the rent and do the service, that is, live a life of faith and repentance, and sincere obedience, you shall never be turned off the tenement; but if now you dislike the terms, and refuse to pay this rent, you forfeit the lease; however, you cannot but say, that you had a kindness done you, to have your lives put into it." Thus did he frequently deal with his children, and even travel in birth again to see Christ formed in them, and from this topic he generally argued, and he would often say, if infant baptism were more improved, it would be less disputed.

He not only taught his children betimes to pray, (which he did especially by his own

pattern, his method and expressions in prayer being very easy and plain) but when they were young he put them upon it, to pray together, and appointed them on Saturdays in the afternoon to spend some time together; none but they and such of their age as might occasionally be with them, in reading good books, especially those for children, and in singing and praying; and would sometimes tell them for their encouragement, that the God with whom we have to do, understands broken language. And if we do as well as we can in the sincerity of our hearts, we shall not only be accepted, but taught to do better: "to him that hath shall be given."

He sometimes set his children, in their own reading of the Scriptures, to gather out such passages as they took most notice of, and thought most considerable, and write them down: though this performance was very small, yet the endeavour was of good use. He also directed them to insert in a paper book, which each of them had for the purpose, remarkable sayings, and stories, which they met with in reading such other good books as he put into their hands.

He took a pleasure in relating to them



the remarkable providences of God, both in his own time, and in the days of old, which he said, parents were taught to do by that appointment, *Exod. xii. 26, 27.* Your children shall ask you in time to come, What mean you by this service? and you shall tell them so and so.

What his pious care was concerning his children, and with what a godly jealousy he was jealous over them, take in one instance: when they had been for a week, or a fortnight, kindly entertained at B. (as they were often,) he thus writes in his diary upon their return home: "My care and fear is, lest converse with such so far above them, though of the best, should have influence upon them to lift them up, when I had rather they should be kept low." For as he did not himself, so he was very solicitous to teach his children, not to mind high things; not to desire them, not to expect them in this world.

We shall conclude this chapter with another passage out of his diary, April 12, 1681. "This day fourteen years the Lord took my first-born son from me, the beginning of my strength, with a stroke. In the remembrance whereof my heart melted this evening: I beg-

ged pardon for the Jonah that raised the storm; I blessed the Lord that hath spared the rest; I begged mercy, mercy for every one of them, and absolutely and unreservedly devoted and dedicated them, myself, my whole self, estate, interest, and life, to the will and service of that God from whom I received all. Father, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come," &c.

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## CHAPTER V.

His Ejectment from Worthenbury—his Non-conformity—his removal to Broad Oak, and other occurrences up to 1672.

WE are now arrived at a period in Mr. Henry's life, in which his troubles may be said to have begun. No sooner had the restoration of the king taken place, than a violent spirit of opposition to such men as Mr. Henry, was manifest throughout the nation. The rectory of Bangor, which had been held many years by Mr. Fogg, now reverted to Doctor Henry Bridgman, in consequence of

which Mr. Henry began to be apprehensive that his interest at Worthenbury was shaken. But in these circumstances he writes, "The will of the Lord be done. Lord, if my work be done here, provide some other minister for this people that may be more skilful, more successful, and cut out work for me, somewhere else. However, I will take nothing ill which God doth with me." He did what he could to conciliate the friendship of Dr. Bridgman, who gave him good words, and was very civil to him, and assured him that he would never remove him, till the law did. But as Worthenbury fell back into its former connexion with Bangor, he was obliged to consider himself as curate to the rector of that parish.

But the great question which now occupied his attention, as well as that of thousands of ministers beside, was, whether to *conform* or not. He took all possible pains to satisfy himself on this point, by reading, and conference with learned men, particularly with Dr. Fell, afterwards bishop of Oxford. But his mind remained unsatisfied. The most of the arguments used with him to induce him to conform, were addressed to the

principle of convenience and self-interest. But he was actuated by far higher motives. And his expression, in his diary, is, "God grant that I may never be left to consult with flesh and blood, in such matters."

In September 1660, Mr. Fogg, Mr. Steel, and Mr. Henry, were presented at Flint Assizes, for not reading the common prayer; although, as yet there was no law enjoining it; but there were some busy people that would out run the law. They were relieved, however, by the king's proclamation, which promised liberty. But in the spring he was presented again, which led him to write thus, "Be merciful to me O God, for man would swallow me up. The Lord show me what he would have me to do, for I am afraid of nothing but sin."

In November 1660, he took the oath of allegiance, of which he has left a memorandum in his diary, with these words added, "God so help me, as I propose in my heart, to do accordingly." Nor could any man more conscientiously observe that oath of God, than he did, or more sincerely promote its ends.

To increase his troubles, his annuity, from

Emeral, was now withheld, and he was treated with much unkindness by some of the members of that family; yet he had the satisfaction of enjoying the unceasing friendship of the Broughton family, even to his dying day.

In the year 1661, many attempts were made to disturb and ensnare him, and the expectation was, that he would soon be silenced, or removed. This state of things induced him to make the following pious reflections. "Methinks, Sabbaths were never so sweet as they now are, when we are kept at such uncertainties. Now, a day in thy courts, is better than a thousand. Such a day as this (a sacrament day) is better than ten thousand. O that we might yet see many such days!"

It was not long before Dr. Bridgman formally gave Mr. Henry his dismissal from Worthenbury, of which notice was published to the congregation, on the 27th of October. He, on that day, preached his farewell sermon, from Phil. i. 27. "Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ." His daily prayer for them was, "The Lord, the God of the spirits of all

flesh, set a man over the congregation." Thus he ceased to preach to his people there, but he did not cease to love them and pray for them. As to the arrears of his annuity, after some time, Mr. Puleston consented to give him a hundred pounds, a good deal less than was due—on condition that he would surrender his deed of annuity, and his lease of the house; which for peace sake, he was willing to do; so he was deprived of all the benefit of Judge Puleston's great kindness to him.

After this, he continued in the house until 1662, but never preached again in the church; though he regularly attended the services of his successor, Mr. Hilton, and joined in all the parts of public worship. And once, being permitted to use his own posture, he partook of the Lord's supper. When silenced, at Worthenbury, he was solicited to preach at Bangor, and Dr. Bridgman was willing to permit it, but he declined it. He frequently preached in other neighbourhoods, however, until Bartholomew's day—"The day," said he, "which our sins have made one of the saddest days to England since the death of Edward VI.—but even this for good."

His reasons for non-conformity were not trivial. He had well considered the whole subject, and weighed the reasons on both sides, in the balances of the sanctuary. He could by no means submit to be re-ordained; so well satisfied was he of his call to the ministry, and his solemn ordination to it, by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, that he durst not do that which looked like a renunciation of it, as null and sinful; and which would be at least a tacit invalidating and condemning all his ministrations. Nor could he truly say, that he felt himself moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon him the office of a deacon. Moreover, the form of subscription required by Dr. Hall, Bishop of Chester was one to which he could not conscientiously consent; because it contained a formal renunciation of his former ordination. *Ego A. B—prætensas meas ordinationis literas, a quibusdam Presbyteris olim obtentas, jam penitus renuncio, &c. &c.* Besides this, he was not satisfied to give his unfeigned assent, to all and every thing, contained in the book of Common Prayer; for “he thought, that thereby he would receive the book itself and every part thereof, ru-

bricks and all, both as true and good; whereas there were several things, which he could not think to be so. The exceptions which the ministers made against the liturgy at the Savoy conference, he thought very considerable; and he could not submit to, much less approve the imposition of ceremonies. He often said, that when Christ came to free us from the yoke of one ceremonial law, he did not leave it in the power of any man, or company of men in the world, to lay another upon our necks. Kneeling at the Lord's supper he was much dissatisfied with; and it was a subject of grief and deep lamentation, that for several years, he was prevented by this regulation, from partaking of this holy ordinance. It need not be wondered at, that he was a non-conformist, for the terms of conformity were intended to keep out just such men as he was.

When his old master Mr. Busby met him, he said my son, how came you to be a non-conformist? Mr. Henry replied, "Why indeed sir, you made me one; the things which I learnt from you are the cause of my non-conformity."

When the Lord Chamberlain told the king,



that the terms of conformity were so hard, that he was afraid that the ministers would not comply with this; Bishop Sheldon, as Mr. Baxter relates, said, "I am afraid they will." Many who were in doubt what they would do, until that act was published, were immediately decided. This is said to have been the fact, in regard to Mr. Anthony Burgess.

But although Mr. Henry was a decided non-conformist on principle, yet he was moderate in his conduct and sentiments; and his example had influence on many to prevent them from running into an uncharitable and schismatical separation, against which he constantly bore his testimony, and was very industrious to stem the tide of such a spirit. In church-government, that which he wished for, was, Archbishop Usher's reduction of Episcopacy. He thought it lawful to join in the common-prayer, in public assemblies, and practised accordingly, and endeavoured to satisfy others, concerning it. The spirit he was of, made him much afraid of extremes, and solicitous for nothing more than to keep up Christian love and charity, among professors.

But to resume the history. He removed to Broad Oaks, at Michaelmas, 1662, just nine years from the time he first came into that part of the country. Three weeks after his arrival, his second son was born; on which occasion he said, "We have no reason to call him *Benoni*, I wish we had none to call him, *Ichabod*."

For several years after his settlement, at Broad Oak, he went with his family, regularly to public worship, on the Lord's day; and did not preach himself, except when he visited his friends; or, to his own family, when the weather hindered them from going to church. In this state of the suspension of his ministry, in which he so much delighted, and so much excelled, he comforted himself, by the consideration, that sometimes he had by attending public worship, the opportunity of conversing with many, and of communicating instructions to them, according to their necessities. And in this way, his lips fed many, and his tongue was as choice silver; and he acted on the sound principle, that when we cannot do what we would, we must do what we can, and the Lord will accept us in it. His motive in attending the

public service, was, to bear his testimony to public ordinances; though sometimes, the sermons preached in his hearing, put patience to a severe trial. His disposition to labour in the vineyard, remained undiminished, and when he visited his friends, he laid himself out to be useful to them in every way. But still his mind was not entirely at ease, in this state of silence, in obedience to human laws, as appears by the following reflections, found in his diary. "I own myself a minister of Christ, yet do nothing as a minister. What will excuse me? Is it enough for me to say, behold I stand in the market place, and no man hath hired me?" Then he appeals to God, "Lord thou knowest what will I have to thy work, public or private, if only I had a call and an opportunity, and shall this willing mind be accepted?"

Surely this is a melancholy consideration, and lays a great deal of blame somewhere, that such a man as Mr. Henry, so well qualified, by gifts and graces, for ministerial work, and in the prime of his life; so sound and orthodox; so humble and modest, so quiet and peaceable, so pious and blameless, should

be thrust out of the vineyard, as a useless and unprofitable servant, and laid aside as a despised and broken vessel, and a vessel in which there was no pleasure. This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation; especially, since it was not his case alone but that of so many hundreds of the same character. The condition of many of these too, was far worse than his, as it regarded temporal subsistence; for they were not only silenced, but cast out from their livings, with large families dependent on them, and without any means of comfortable support. One of his intimate friends, Mr. Lawrence, when ejected, had a wife and ten children, and nothing to support them. When asked what he intended to do, he calmly replied, "they must live on the Vith. of Matthew, "Take no thought for your life." And he often sung with his family, Psalm xxxvii. 16. And Mr. Henry has noted in his diary, the love and mercy of God towards this dependent family, providing for them in a way beyond all expectation. At the close of Mr. Henry's life, when now old, he remarks, that although the families of the ejected ministers were brought often very low, as they

had many children, and were greatly harassed by persecution; and their friends commonly poor and unable to help them; yet he never heard that any of them were imprisoned for debt.

In October 1663, Mr. Henry and his friend, Mr. Steel, were taken up, and brought prisoners to Hanmer, on pretence of some plot against the government. While under duress, he writes, "It is sweet being in any condition, with a clear conscience; the sting of death is sin, and so of imprisonment, also. 'Tis the first time I was ever prisoner, but it may not be the last; we felt no hardship but we know not what we may." Upon examination of the proper officers, nothing appeared against them, and they were dismissed, but held under a recognizance to appear again at twenty-four hours warning, when called for. Mr. Henry returned to his tabernacle, with thanksgiving to God, and a hearty prayer for his enemies, that God would forgive them. The very next day after they were released, a great man in the country, at whose instigation they were brought into trouble, died, it is said of a drunken surfeit. So that a man shall say,

“Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.” In the beginning of the year 1665, when an act was passed for two millions and a half to be collected in aid of his majesty, the Commissioners of Flintshire appointed Mr. Henry a sub-collector for the township of Iscoyd, and Mr. Steel for Hanmer; which was intended to put an affront upon these persecuted men, and to show that they were regarded as mere laymen. In September, of the same year, he and Mr. Steel were again apprehended, and examined in relation to some private meetings which they had attended. Mr. Henry averred that in Shropshire, he had attended some private meetings; but the case was extraordinary. The plague was at that time raging in London; and he and several of his friends having near relatives there thought it reasonable to seek the Lord for them; and this was imputed to them as a crime. He was likewise charged with having administered the Lord’s Supper, which he denied; having never administered it since the act of uniformity had passed. After some days confinement, since they could prove nothing against him, he was discharged on a recognizance of twenty pounds,

with two sureties to be forthcoming, on notice, and to live peaceably.

At Lady day, 1666, the five mile act went into operation by which all non-conformist ministers were forbidden, on pain of six months imprisonment, to come, or be, within five miles of any corporation, or of any place where they had been ministers; unless they would take an oath, which, it was reported, the Earl of Southampton, then Lord high treasurer of England, said, 'no honest man could take.' Mr. Baxter, in his life, has set down at large his reasons against taking this Oxford oath, as it was called. 'Twas an oath, not at any time to endeavour any alteration of the government, in the church or state. Mr. Henry had already taken the oath of allegiance to the King, and he considered this an oath of allegiance to the bishops, which he was not free to take.

His reflections on the occasion are worthy of our notice. "This day methought, it was made more clear to me than ever, by the hand of my God upon me, and I note it down, that I may remember it, 1. That the government of the church of Christ ought to be managed by the ministers of Christ. It

appears from Heb. xiii. 7, that they are to rule who speak to us the word of God. 2. That under prelacy ministers have not the management of Church government, not in the least, being only the publishers of the prelates, decrees, as in excommunication and absolution; which decrees, are sometimes given forth by lay chancellors. 3. That, therefore, prelacy is an usurpation in the church of God, upon the crown and dignity of Jesus Christ, and upon the gospel rights of his servants, the ministers. 4. And, therefore, I ought not to subscribe it (this oath) nor to swear not to endeavour, in all lawful ways, the alteration of it, viz: by persuading and praying where there is opportunity. 5. That I may safely venture to suffer in the refusal of such an oath, committing my soul, life, estate, liberty, all, to HIM who judgeth righteously." On the day, on which the act passed, he writes: "A sad day among poor ministers, up and down this nation; who by this act of restraint, are forced to remove from among their friends, acquaintance, and relations, and to sojourn among strangers, as it were in Mesech, and in the tents of Kedar. But there is a God, who



tells their wanderings, and will put their tears, and the tears of his wives and children, in his bottle; are they not in his book? The Lord be a little sanctuary to them, and a place of refuge, from the storm and from the tempest; and pity those places from which they are ejected!"

Mr. Henry's house, at Broad Oak, was but four computed miles from the nearest border of Worthenbury parish, but he got it measured, and counting 1760 yards to a mile, which was statute measure, it was found to be just five miles and threescore yards; which one would think, would have been enough to secure him from the operation of this law; but there were persons near him, disposed to stretch the laws to the utmost rigour, and therefore insisted on it being understood, of computed miles. This obliged him, for some time, to leave his family, and to sojourn among his friends, to whom he endeavoured, wherever he came, to impart some spiritual gift. At last, he ventured home, presuming, among other things, that the warrant by which he was made collector of the royal aid, while that continued, would secure him, according to a proviso, in the last

clause of the act; which, when his persecutors perceived, they discharged him from that office, before he had served out the time.

He was much affected with that dispensation of providence, by which the non-conformists were removed from London, before the great fire; as it seemed to be in mercy to them, to remove them out of the way, before that desolating judgment came. But he considered it a loud call to the rulers of the nation, as though it had been said, "Let my people go that they may serve me; and if ye will not, behold thus and thus will I do unto you."

In the beginning of the year 1667, he removed his family to Whitchurch, and dwelt there above a year, except that for one quarter, about harvest, he returned to Broad Oak. His removal to Whitchurch, was, partly to quiet his enemies, who were ever ready to trouble him, on the ground of the five mile act; and partly for the benefit of the school there, for his children. And there he buried his eldest son, not quite six years old; a child of extraordinary pregnancy and forwardness in learning, and a very tractable disposition. His own character of the child was, "*Præ-*

*terque ætatem nil puerile fuit*, i. e. except his age, there was nothing childish about him! This was a great affliction to the parents. Mr. Henry, many years afterwards, said, he thought he did, at that time, apply too sensibly to himself, that Scripture in Lam. iii. 1. "I am the man that hath seen affliction." And he would say to his friends, on such occasions, "Losers think they may have leave to speak, but they must have a care what they say, lest speaking amiss to God's dishonour, they make work for repentance, and shed tears, that must be wept over again." He remarked that this child had been always very patient, under rebukes, "the remembrance of which," says he, "teacheth me now how to carry it under the rebuke of my heavenly Father. His prayer on this occasion, was, "Show me Lord, show me, wherefore thou contendest with me. Have I over-boasted, over-loved, over-prized." A Lord's day intervening between the death and burial of the child, he attended public worship. Though sad in spirit, like Job, who after all the evil tidings that were brought him, of which the death of children was the last and heaviest, yet fell down and worship-

ped. And he would often say, on such occasions, "weeping must not hinder sowing." Upon the interment of the child, he has this remark: "My dear child, now mine no longer, was laid in the cold earth; not lost, but sown to be raised again, a glorious body—and I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." A few days after, his dear friend, Lawrence, buried a daughter, that was grown up, and very hopeful, and gave good evidence of a work of grace wrought upon her soul. On which he observes, "How willing may parents be to part with such, when the Lord calls: they are not lost but gone before." "The Lord hath made his poor servants, that have been often companions in his work, now companions in tribulation—the very same tribulation—me for my sin; but him for his trial."

While at Whitchurch, he attended reverently and punctually on the public services of the church. In the evening of the Lord's day, he spent some time instructing his family, to which a few of his friends and neighbours, in the town, would sometimes come in; and it was a little gleam of opportunity, but very short; "for," as he remarks, "He

was offended at it, who ought rather to have rejoiced, if by any means the work might be carried on in his people's souls." In this year, 1667, for the first time he administered the Lord's supper, very privately, to a few pious persons, who did not think it lawful to receive the ordinance, kneeling.

In February 1668, he and Mr. Lawrence, being at Betley, in Staffordshire; and there being, at that time, some little connivance, with the consent of all concerned, they preached in the church; the one in the morning, and the other in the afternoon of the Lord's day, very peaceably and profitably. This action of theirs, however, was soon afterwards, reported in the House of Commons, with the addition, that they tore the prayer book, trampled the surplice under their feet, and pulled the minister of the place out of the pulpit. This and other false reports, induced many to petition to have the laws more rigorously executed against the non-conformists. The King accordingly issued a proclamation to that effect; but in his speech at the opening of the parliament, he had recently expressed the desire that some way might be found to compose the

minds of his protestant subjects; which excited hopes in many, that there would speedily be enlargement. Mr. Henry's sage, and pious remark was, "We cannot expect too little from man, nor too much from God."

It furnishes a remarkable evidence that Mr. Henry and his non-conformist friends, acted from conscientious and disinterested principles, that although they were so severely treated by the government, and were harassed by vexatious prosecutions on the ground of mere suspicion; yet they, generally used their endeavours to preserve and promote a good affection towards civil rulers. Although oppression is suited to make a wise man mad; and on this account the non-conformist ministers were commonly denounced from the pulpits of the nation, as a turbulent and factious people; and as was said of old, "hurtful to kings and provinces;" yet they remained quiet, and created no disturbances in the land. Mr. Henry's sentiments—with which his conduct was correspondent—may be best learned from a sermon preached by him to a few friends, in one of those private meetings, called "seditious conventicles," in the year, 1669. The following is an extract.

The text was Psalm xxxv. 20, "That is the character of the people of God, that they are a quiet people, in the land." This quietness, he described to be, an orderly peaceable subjection to governors and government in the Lord. We must maintain a reverent esteem of them, and of their authority, in opposition to despising dominions. We must be meek, under severe commands and burthensome impositions, not murmuring and complaining, as the Israelites, against Moses and Aaron; but take them up as the cross in our way, and bear them as we do foul weather. We must not speak evil of dignities; nor revile the gods. Paul checked himself for this. I did not consider it, if I had, I would not have said so. We must not traduce the government, as Absalom did David's. Great care is to be taken how we speak of the faults of any, especially, rulers. The people of God do make the word of God their rule, and by that they are taught, that magistracy is God's ordinance, and magistrates God's ministers: that by him kings reign, and the powers that be are ordained of him: that they, as well as others, are to have their dues, honour, fear, and tribute; that their lawful commands are

to be obeyed, and that readily and cheerfully: that the penalties for not obeying unlawful commands, are patiently to be undergone. This is the rule, and as many as walk according to this rule, peace shall be upon them, and there is no danger of their unpeaceableness. They are taught to pray for kings and all that are in authority—and God forbid that we should do otherwise; yea though they persecute. Peaceable prayers bespeak a peaceable people. If some professing religion have been unquiet, their unquietness hath given the lie to their profession. Quietness is our badge. 'Twill be our strength—our rejoicing in the day of evil. It is pleasing to God—it may work upon others. The means for keeping our hearts quiet, is to get them filled with the knowledge of these two things, 1. That the kingdom of Christ is not of this world. 2. That the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. He needs not our sin to bring to pass his own counsel. We must mortify unquietness in the causes of it. We must always remember the oath of God; the oath of allegiance is an oath of quietness. And we must beware of the company and con-



versation of those that are unquiet. Though deceitful matters be devised, we must be quiet still; nay, be so much the more quiet." Every sentence of the above is supported by a reference to a Scripture text. The passages referred to are, 2 Pet. ii. 10; Jude 8; Exod. xxii. 28; Acts xxiii. 5; 2 Sam. xv. 3; Eccles. x. 20; Titus iii. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2; Jer. xxix. 7; Psal. cix. 4; Jude ii. 12; Col. iii. 12; Isa. xxx. 7. 15; Jer. xviii. 18; 1 Pet. ii. 12, 13; James iv. 1; Eccles. viii. 2.

In 1663, Mr. Henry returned again with his family from Whitchurch to Broad Oak, which continued to be his settled home, till he was removed to his long home, about twenty-eight years after this time.

The rigour of the five-mile act began now to abate, and more opportunity was enjoyed for doing good, than before, which Mr. Henry endeavoured to improve to the utmost; especially in instructing the ignorant, helping on their way to heaven such as needed his aid.

In the beginning of his account book, he placed that text. Prov. iii. 9, 10, "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase; so shall thy

barns be filled with plenty; and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." And he not only wrote it down but practised it. After his return, he kept a day of fasting and prayer, to beg of God, a wise and understanding heart, and to drop a tear—as he expressed it—over the sins of his predecessors, formerly in that estate. He laid himself out very much in doing good; and was in many ways serviceable to his neighbourhood. He was very useful in the common concerns of the township and country, in which he was a very prudent counsellor. And although an humble service for a man of his office and gifts, "Yet men gave ear and waited, and kept silence at his counsel: after his words they spake not again," Job xxix. 21. Many, who respected him not as a minister, loved and honoured him as a knowing, prudent, and humble neighbour. References were sometimes made to him, by rule of court, with consent of parties. He was very affable and easy of access, and admirably patient in hearing every one's complaint, which he would answer with so much prudence and mildness, and gave such apt advice, that many a time to consult with him, was to

end the matter. He observed that in almost all quarrels, there were faults on both sides, and that generally they were most in fault, who were most clamorous and forward. One making her complaint to him of a bad husband; unkind in this respect, and the other; and concluded by saying; sir, what would you have me to do? He mildly answered, "I would have you to go home and be a better wife to him, and then you'll find, that he'll be a better husband to you."

Labouring with one to forgive an injury, he said, "Are you not a Christian?" and urged this, until he prevailed. He often persuaded people to give up some of their rights for the sake of peace. And would tell them Luther's story of the two goats, which met on a narrow bridge, over a deep water. They could not go back, they durst not fight; but after a short parley, one of them lay down and let the other go over him, and no harm done. He would also tell a story, worthy of being preserved, of a good friend of his, Mr. T. G. of Whitchurch, who, in his youth was greatly wronged by an unjust uncle of his, being an orphan. His portion,

which was £200 was put into the hands of this uncle; who when he grew up shuffled with him, and would give him but forty pounds; and he had no way of recovering his right but by law. But before he would engage in that he resolved to consult his minister, no other than the celebrated Dr. Twiss, of Newbury. His advice was to take the £40, rather than go to law, saying, "Thomas, if thou dost so, assure thyself that God will make it up to thee, and thine, some other way; and they that defraud thee will be the losers by it, at last." He took the advice and God so prospered that little stock with which he began the world, that when he died, in a good old age, he left his son possessed of some hundreds a year; and he that wronged him fell into decay.

Many very pious worthy families, in the country, said of Mr. Henry, that they had no friend, like minded, who did naturally care for their state, and so affectionately sympathize with them, and in whom their hearts could safely trust.

He was very charitable to the poor, and full of alms-deeds, which he did himself, or put up others to do; and whenever he gave

an alms for the body, he accompanied it with some good word of counsel, reproof, instruction, or comfort; and in accommodating these to the persons addressed he had a great dexterity. He was very free to lend money to the poor; and would say, there is often more charity in lending, than in giving, because it obliged the borrower, both to honesty and industry.

He deemed it lawful to take a moderate interest for money lent, where the borrower was in the way of gaining by it; but he advised his friends, that had money, to dispose of it rather in some other way, if they could. In all his accounts with his tenants and mechanics, he was very exact; and in the management of his farm, neat, and orderly; which was considered remarkable, in one brought up to learning, as he was. While he lived at Broad Oak, though necessarily engaged in agricultural pursuits, which rendered considerable traffic necessary; yet in the whole time he never sued any man; nor was he ever sued for money by any one. His rules about lawsuits were, "1. Do not go to law for trifles. 2. Be not rash or hasty in the matter, but try all other methods first.

3. Never go to law out of malice, or revenge.
4. Let it be with a disposition to have peace, as soon as possible."

He never approved the course of those professors, who on pretence of religion, neglect their worldly business. . And he would tell of a religious woman, who had this fault, and was convinced of her error, by means of an intelligent, godly neighbour, who coming to the house when the day was far advanced, and finding the woman in her closet, while her children and household affairs were neglected, said in a solemn tone, "What, is there no fear of God in this house?" which much startled and affected the good woman, who overheard him. He would often say, "every thing is beautiful in its season." And that it is the wisdom of the prudent, so to order the duties of their general callings as Christians, and those of their particular calling in the world, so as that they may not clash or interfere. "There may be overdoing, in well doing."

When asked to be security for one who had been security for him, he said, "Solomon saith, that he that hateth suretyship is sure." But he saith also, "He that hath

friends must show himself friendly." But he always cautioned his friends not to be bound for any more than they knew that they were able to pay; nor for more than they would be willing to pay, if the principal failed.

He was pleased that his house, at Broad Oak, was near the road, because it occasioned the more frequent calls of his friends, and gave him an opportunity of showing kindness to strangers, and to help such as were any way distressed on the road; for he was, on all occasions, cheerfully ready to relieve his distressed fellow creatures; fully answering the apostle's character of a bishop, "that he must be of good behaviour, decent, affable, obliging, and given to hospitality." Like Abraham, who sat at his tent door in quest of opportunities to do good. If he met with any poor near his house he gave them alms in money, yet he would bid them go to his door besides, for relief there. He was very tender and compassionate towards poor strangers, and travellers; though, as might be expected, his charity was often imposed on by cheats and pretenders, of whom he was not apt to be suspicious; but would say,

“Thou knowest not the heart of a stranger.” If he met with any begging, whom he thought did wrong in pursuing this course, after giving an alms, he would kindly reprove them, and exhort them to pursue honest industry for a living; otherwise they could not expect God to bless them. But he would not chide them, but reason with them. For he would say, if he reprovèd them and gave them nothing, it would look only like an excuse to deny his charity; and his reproof would be sure to be rejected.

In a word, his greatest care about the things of this world was to do good with what he had, and to devise liberal things; desiring to make no other accession to his estate, than that blessing which attends beneficence. He firmly believed, that what was given to the poor is lent to the Lord, who will pay it again in kind, or kindness; and that religion and charity is surely the best friend to outward prosperity. He found it so in his own experience, for it pleased God abundantly to bless his habitation, and to make a hedge about him, and about all that he had round about. And though he did not delight himself in the abundance of



wealth, yet, which is far better, he delighted himself in the abundance of peace. All that he had and did, observably prospered; so that it was noticed by all around, and people would say, "This is a family which the Lord has blessed." And his comforts, of this kind, were as he used to pray they might be—oil to the wheels of his obedience. And in these things he served the Lord his God with joyfulness and gladness of heart; yet still mindful of, and grieved for the affliction of Joseph. When in the midst of the comforts of this life, he would say, sometimes, "What! all this, and heaven too! then surely we serve a good Master." Thus did the Lord bless him, and make him a blessing; and this abundant grace, through the thanksgiving of many, redounded to the glory of God.

During his residence at Broad Oak, Mr. Henry, as has been said, regularly attended the church with his family; was always present when the service commenced, and remained until it was ended; and if there was a baptism, he waited for this also, but not for a wedding, for he disapproved of this on the

Lord's day. He often invited the preacher to dinner; and after dinner he was accustomed to sing a hymn, and then preach to his own family, when two or three others would drop in; and many an excellent sermon he preached, when there were only four present, besides his family, according to the limitation of the conventicle act. In these narrow circumstances, he preached over the first part of the Assembly's Catechism, from divers texts. He also preached over the 116th Psalm, besides many particular, occasional subjects.

He commonly had in his house one or more young scholars, preparing for the university. The first of these was Mr. William Turner, afterwards of Edmund's Hall, Oxford, to whom the world is indebted for the elaborate "History of all Religions," edited in the year 1695; and the "Record of the remarkable Providences of God." Between him and Mr. Henry there existed a most entire and affectionate friendship; and an endearing and constant correspondence. It was remarked, that several of the young men who lived in his house, died, soon after

leaving him; as if God had sent them there, to be prepared for another world, before they were called for out of this.

For a long time he entertained so high an opinion of the advantages of the universities, as places of education, that he advised all his friends to send their sons, although he knew that conformity would be the consequence. But he afterwards changed his opinion, and would not send his own son, but chose rather to keep him at home with him, and to give him what help he could there, in his education, than venture him into the snares and temptations of the university.

Soon after his settlement at Broad Oak, he formed an acquaintance with that learned, judicious, and pious gentleman, Mr. Hunt, and with his excellent lady, Frances, daughter of the right honourable Lord Paget, which soon ripened into an intimate friendship, which continued, without interruption, until his dying day. It was a constant rejoicing to him, to see religion and the power of godliness uppermost in such a family as that, when not many mighty and not many noble are called. Divers of the honourable relations of that family contracted a very

great respect for him, particularly, the present Lord Paget, his majesty's ambassador at the Ottoman court, and Sir Henry Ashurst, of whom mention will be made in the sequel.

Two remarks from his diary shall close this chapter, which will show what manner of spirit he was of, and what were his sentiments of things at that time. The first is, "All acknowledge that there is, at this day, a number of sober, peaceable men, both ministers and people, among dissenters; but who saith or doth any thing to oblige them? Who desireth, or endeavoureth to open the door to let in such? Nay, do they not rather provoke them to run into the same extravagancies with others, by making no difference, but laying a load on them, as if they were as bad as the worst." 'Tis true, that Lord Keeper Bridgeman, Bishop Wilkins, and Chief Justice Hale, were making some overtures for an accommodation with them, but this only served to exasperate their adversaries the more; and the event was greater acts of severity.

Another is this, "If all that has been said and written to prove prelacy to be anti-

Christian, and that it is unlawful to join in the common prayer, had been said effectually to persuade bishops to study, and do the duty of church rulers, in preaching, and feeding the flock, according to the word, and to persuade people to be spiritual in the use of forms, it had been better with the church of God in England, than it now is." Consonant to this, was a remark which he often made, and took occasion to mention, as his settled principle, viz. "In those things where all the people of God are agreed, I will spend my zeal; and wherein they differ, I will endeavour to walk according to the light which God hath given me, and charitably believe that others do so too."



## CHAPTER VI.

From the year 1672 to 1680.

As was mentioned, there was some relaxation in the execution of the severe act against conventicles; so that, in some places, the non-conformists ventured to set up meetings

for religious conference and worship; but it was not until the early part of the year 1672, that they received indulgence by the royal declaration. What the secret springs were which produced this indulgence, time sufficiently revealed; however, to the poor, distressed dissenters, it was as life from the dead, and gave them some reviving in their bondage. It never should be said, that those people were hard to be pleased, who were so much rejoiced at this little breathing spell, precarious as it was. The purport of the king's declaration was, that, "in consideration of the inefficacy of rigour, tried for divers years, and to invite strangers into the kingdom, it suspended the penal laws against all non-conformists and recusants; promised to license separate places for meetings; limiting papists only to private houses."

In regard to this liberty, Mr. Henry remarks, "That the conformists were displeas'd; the Presbyterians were glád; the Independents very glad, and the Papists triumphed." He was afraid that it would tend to sow divisions, and break up parish-order. "We are hereby," said he, "put into a trilemma; either to turn Independents, in

practice, to strike in with the conformists; or to sit down in former silence and sufferings, till the Lord shall open a more effectual door." What he desired was, "That those who were in place would permit the sober non-conformists to preach occasionally in their pulpits; by which means he thought prejudices would in time wear off, on both sides; and they might constantly strengthen each other's hands against the papists, who, he foresaw, would fish best in troubled waters. This he would have chosen much rather than keeping a separate meeting. But such a privilege could not be had; for he was never allowed to preach in Whitwell chapel, even when it was vacant.

A few weeks after the declaration, he received a license like Paul, to preach in his own house, to all that came to him, no man forbidding him. But he was still so much opposed to division, that he would not preach when there was public service in the church, and held meeting in his own house only in the evening. He now preached and expounded, and united with the people in prayer and praise. But his services were entirely gratuitous; he asked nothing and re-

ceived nothing for his labours of love. And not only so, but as worshippers came often from a distance, it subjected him to a considerable expense, in providing entertainment for his friends. But this he never grudged. His saying on such occasions was, "That the ark is a guest that always pays well for its entertainment." And he remarked, "that when Christ borrowed Peter's boat, to preach a sermon out of it, he presently repaid him for the same, with a great draught of fishes. Luke v. 3, 4.

Although he had many thoughts about accepting this indulgence; yet after a while his judgment was clear, that he ought to make use of it, and accordingly, while it lasted, he was "in labours more abundant." He preached many lectures abroad, in Cheshire, Denbighshire, and Shropshire, laying himself out exceedingly for the good of souls—spending and being spent in the work of the Lord. And his labours were not in vain in the Lord; for it might be said of this man and that man, that he was born again, then and there. And many there were, who asked the way to Zion, with their faces thitherwards, and were savingly brought



home to Jesus Christ: that is, such as had been vain and careless, and worldly, and regardless of God and another world, became sober and serious, and concerned about their souls, and a future state.

Whatever lectures were set up in the country round, it was still desired, that Mr. Henry would begin them: and very happy he was, both in the choice and management of his subjects, on such occasions. Take one specimen, from a discourse on Heb. xii. 15. "I assure you," says he, "and God is my witness, that I have not come to preach, either sedition against the state, or schism against the peace of the church, by persuading you to this or that party, or opinion; but as a minister of Christ that hath received mercy from the Lord, to desire to be faithful, my errand is to exhort you to all possible seriousness, in the great business of your eternal salvation, according to my text, which if the Lord will make as profitable to you as it is of weight in itself, neither I nor you shall have cause to repent my coming hither, and being here to day, looking diligently lest any of you fail of the grace of God. If it were the last sermon I were to

preach, I should not know how to take my aim better, to do you good."

His heart was wonderfully enlarged about this time. The fields were white ready to the harvest; and he was busy, and God did remarkably own him, setting many seals to his ministry, which much confirmed him in the course which he had been led to pursue.

In his diary, for March 1673, he has the following memento, "Remember that if trouble should come for what we now do in the use of present liberty, I neither shrink from it, nor sink under it; for I do therein approve myself to God, and to my own conscience, in truth and uprightness; and the Lord whom I serve, can, and will certainly bear me out, and bring me off with comfort in the end."

At the commencement of this liberty, the society of Broad Oak was formed out of persons who had belonged to several contiguous parishes. To these hungry souls he administered the bread of life, but would not suffer himself to be called their pastor; but being a minister of Jesus Christ, he thought himself bound to preach the gospel as he had opportunity. Usually, once a month, he administered the ordinance of the Lord's supper.

Some of those communion days are noted in his diary, as “sweet, sealing days, in which he found it good to draw near to God.”

Towards the close of this year, there was a general expectation of the cancelling of the indulgence, on which, on a previous Sabbath and sacrament day, he remarks. “Perhaps this may be the last; ‘Father, thy will be done.’ It is good for us to be at such uncertainties; for now we receive our liberty from our Father, fresh, every day, which is best and sweetest of all.”

In the years, 1677, 1678, and 1679, in the course of his ministry, at Broad Oak, he preached over the ten commandments; and from other texts of Scripture largely opened the duties required, and sins forbidden, in each commandment. For although none delighted more than he in preaching Christ and gospel grace; yet he knew that Christ came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil; and that though through grace, we are not under the law as a covenant, yet we are under it as a rule—“under the law to Christ.” “We have known,” says he, “those who have called preaching on such subjects, good moral preaching; but

let them call it as they will, I am sure it is necessary, and as much now as ever." He was very earnest in pressing upon the people, the conscientious performance of moral and relative duties. He would say, "A good Christian will be a good husband, a good father, a good master, a good subject, a good neighbour, and so in other relations." He was fully persuaded of the truth of the proverb, "Honesty is the best policy." "These are things," he would say, "in which the children of this world are competent judges. They that know not what belongs to faith, and repentance and prayer, yet know what belongs to the making of an honest bargain." They are also parties concerned, and often careful themselves, in these things; therefore, professors of religion should walk very circumspectly, "that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed," nor religion wounded through their sides. He was especially pointed in reprovng sins against the ninth commandment, as being so common, and their evil so little thought of. He gave it as a rule, "If we can say no good of persons, we had better say nothing of them." Also, "Never to speak of any one's faults

to others, till we have first spoken of them to the offender himself." He was himself an eminent example of this rule. Some that have conversed much with him have said, that they never heard him speak evil of any body; nor could he bear to hear any spoken evil of, and would often drive away a back-biting tongue. But to offenders themselves, he was known to be a faithful reprover. When he preached of moral duties, he would always have something of Christ in the service, as the great pattern of the duty, or his love as the motive to it; or his merit, as making atonement for the neglect of it. In the year 1680, he preached over the doctrines of faith and repentance, from several texts. He used to tell, that it was said of the famous Mr. Dod, that some called him in scorn, FAITH AND REPENTANCE, because he insisted so much on these two, in his preaching. "But," said he, "if this is to be vile, I will be more vile still; for faith and repentance are all in all, in Christianity." Concerning repentance, he sometimes said, "If I were to die in the pulpit, I would desire to die preaching repentance; or if I die out of the

pulpit, I would desire to die, practising repentance." And he often came over this saying, "He who repents every day for the sins of every day, when he comes to die, will have but the sins of one day to repent of." "Even reckonings make long friends."

In the year 1681, Mr. Henry preached over the duties of hearing the word and prayer. Of the former from the parable of the sower; and on the Lord's prayer, he delivered above thirty excellent and elaborate discourses. He looked upon the Lord's prayer, to be not only a pattern for prayer but—according to the advice of the Assembly of Divines—proper to be used as a form. "A great strait," says he, "poor ministers are in, in relation to this matter, when some will not hear them if they do not use the Lord's prayer, and others will not hear them, if they do. What is to be done in such a case? We must walk according to the light we have, and approve ourselves to God, either in using or not using it; and wait for the day when God will mend the matter, which I hope he will do in his own due time."

He was just concluding his lectures on the

Lord's prayer when a dark cloud arose over his assemblies, which compelled him to contract his sails.



## CHAPTER VII.

The trials and persecutions which he endured between the years 1680 and 1687.

IN the summer of 1681, there was a long and alarming drought, which induced many pious persons to think of a day of fasting, prayer, and humiliation, to supplicate relief, and to deprecate the righteous judgments of God. The meeting was held at the house of a private gentleman, in Shropshire, and Mr. Henry was invited to preach. From the indulgence which had been granted, for some time, no fears were entertained of the interference of the magistrates, to enforce the penal laws, against conventicles. But when Mr. Henry was in the midst of his sermon, founded on Psalm lxvi. 8, the congregation was interrupted by the entrance of two magistrates, who insulted the ministers, talked profanely,

and had the names of the congregation taken down, to the number of a hundred and fifty. These magistrates, it may be remarked, came directly from an ale-house and bowling-green, in the neighbourhood, where they were accustomed to resort for purposes of dissipation and intemperance. Fines were inflicted on ministers and people according to their notions of their criminality; but they were not very careful to go exactly by the law. Mr. Henry, however, being the chief offender, and able to pay, they fined £40. They also lodged an information against him before the justices of Flintshire, his own county, who had not been disposed to give him any trouble; but now they were obliged to act in the case; and the original fine was doubled. It was much pressed upon him to pay the fine and prevent further vexation; but he was unwilling to do it, partly, because he would give no encouragement to such prosecutions, nor reward the informers for that for which they rather deserved punishment; and partly because he thought himself wronged in the doubling of the fine; his goods were therefore distrained upon, and carried away. The law not permitting them



to break locks, or enter into the apartments of the house, they seized such produce of the farm as they could lay their hands on, out of doors; such as cut grain, hay, coals, &c. to the amount of thirty-three cart loads of goods. This made a great noise in the country, and provoked the indignation of many against the unrighteous decrees, which prescribed such grievous proceedings against peaceable citizens, for no other offence than attempting, by united prayer, to avert the heavy judgments of heaven, under which the people were suffering. Mr. Henry bore it with his usual evenness of mind. His serenity was not in the least disturbed by the event. But he never clamoured about his sufferings, nor made a boast of them; but would say, "Alas this is nothing to what others suffer, nor to what we ourselves may suffer before we die." He did rejoice, however, that it was not for crime or ill-doing that he suffered, and his remark was, "While it is for well doing that we suffer, they cannot harm us." In his diary he writes, "How often have we said that changes are at the door; but blessed be God, there is no sting in this." He entertained a full assurance that all these losses

would be more than made up to him. His maxim was, "Though we may be losers for Christ, yet we shall not be losers by him, in the end." And he often said, that "preaching was likely to do the most good, when it was sealed to by suffering."

The case of Mr. Bury, one of the ministers present at this meeting, was truly hard, and suited to excite compassion and indignation, at the same time. The Conventicle Act makes it only punishable to preach or teach in such meetings; but he only prayed; and yet he was fined in the sum of twenty pounds; which, being poor, he was utterly unable to pay. They, therefore, took off seven pounds, and laid it on others; and for the remainder, they took from him, by distress, the bed on which he lay, with both blanket and rug; also another feather bed, and nineteen sheets, most of them new. And this man, though he had violated no law, and incurred no penalty, found no redress; so that the good man sat down with his loss, "and took joyfully the spoiling of his goods, knowing in himself, that in heaven he had a better and more enduring substance."

Though the famous Judge Jeffries often came into that circuit, and on one occasion received some information calculated to implicate Mr. Henry, yet for some reason, he never gave him any trouble. It was said the reason was, that Mr. Henry was a great friend of his mother's, and sometimes at her request, had examined him on his school learning when he was a boy. The information lodged with the judge against Mr. Henry, was for a thing which could be considered a transgression of no law, human or divine. The case was this, an agreement had been made by some ministers, to spend some time between six and eight o'clock, either in their closets, or with their families, every Monday morning, in prayer for the church of God, and for the land and nation, more particularly than at other times. This concert had been communicated to Mr. Henry, by some of his friends at London, and he punctually observed it for many years, in his own practice. A person to whom he had communicated it was so well pleased, that he wrote a letter concerning it, to a friend at a distance, which letter happened to fall into hands that perverted it

so that both the writer and receiver of the letter were bound over to the assizes; and Judge Jeffries believed it to be a part of the Presbyterian plot against the church and the nation, and severely reprimanded the persons accused. But though it appeared by the intercepted letter, that the plan had been received from Mr. Henry, yet the judge let it fall, and never inquired further into the affair, which was a matter of astonishment to all who knew him. However, at the next assizes, after his goods had been distrained upon, he was presented by one of the high constables for holding conventicles at his house, and for saying, "that the law for suppressing conventicles ought not to be obeyed, and that there was never a tittle of the word of God in it." As to this last presentment, it was altogether false. He had, indeed, in conversation with the high constable, said, that all human laws ought not to be obeyed, merely because they were laws. He had too much prudence to make any such remark on the law, under which he suffered, for he knew that he had fallen upon evil times, when so many were made offenders for a word.

In this same year, 1681, a public conference was held between Dr. William Lloyd, bishop of Coventry and Litchfield, with several dissenting ministers, of whom Mr. Henry was one. This learned bishop, when he came into his diocese, thought it his duty to endeavour to reduce the dissenters within his jurisdiction, to obedience to the church; and he resolved to try the efficacy of reason with them, before he had recourse to any harsher measures. If any declined coming to converse with him, he made use of it as an argument against them, for he alleged, "that no man can plead conscience for not coming, when he is required to give an account of his religion to them that have authority to demand it, by the laws of the country; and to hear from their mouths, what can be said for the established religion. These things," said he, "are such as conscience is so far from excusing us for not doing, that it requires them as an indispensable duty, to give an account of their hope, to every one that asketh a reason of the same; and that we should hear them that are in Moses's chair; and, therefore, they who re-

fused this he would consider as governed by obstinacy, not by conscience."

The most considerable dissenting minister in those parts was Mr. James Owen, of Oswestry, then very young, but well known since as an author, by the book entitled, "A Plea for Scripture Ordination;" the object of which is to prove the validity of ordination by presbyters, without a diocesan bishop. Bishop Lloyd had held several private conferences with him; but at length insisted on a public conference, or disputation, in the town hall of Oswestry, on Tuesday, the 27th of September, 1681; then to give an account by what right he exercised the ministry, not having received episcopal ordination. He directed him also to get what ministers he could to assist him, as he wished to hear what any of them had to say for themselves. Some whom Mr. Owen invited to his aid, declined, as believing, that more harm than good was likely to arise out of it. Mr. Henry, to whose meek and modest spirit, such things were very repugnant, was loath to desert his young friend, Mr. Owen; and so, after much importunity, he resolved to

attend; and besides him, no one came, except Mr. Jonathan Roberts, a plain man, of great integrity, and a very good scholar. The bishop came, according to his appointment, and brought with him Mr. Henry Dodwell, afterwards so celebrated in ecclesiastical controversy. Mr. Henry, who was an entire stranger to the bishop, begged hard that the controversy might be held in private, before a select number of friends; but it could not be obtained. He also requested, that it might not be expected that he, being of another diocese, should take any part in the controversy, but only as a hearer. "Nay," said the bishop, "it is not the concern of my diocese alone, but it is the common cause of religion, and therefore I expect you should interest yourself more in it than as a hearer." His lordship was pleased to promise that nothing spoken by way of argument, should be turned to the disadvantage of the disputants, nor should it be the occasion of trouble to them. There were present divers of the clergy and gentry, of the surrounding country, with the magistrates of the town, and a great multitude of people, which was very unpleasant to Mr. Henry's feelings, who

never loved any thing that made a noise. The discourse began about two o'clock in the afternoon, and continued till about seven or eight, at night. It was managed with a great deal of liberty, and not under the strict laws of disputation, which made it hard to give an accurate account of the particulars. The bishop managed his part of the controversy with a great deal of gravity, calmness, and evenness of spirit, and therein gave an excellent pattern to all that are placed in such stations. Hr. Henry's remarks in his diary on the management and result of this unsought for dispute, are humbling enough. "Upon reflection," says he "I find, I have great reason to be ashamed of my manifold imperfections and infirmities; and yet do bless God, that seeing I could manage it no better, to do the truth more service, there was no more done to its disservice. To God be the glory," But others thought, that, on this occasion, Mr. Henry was an instrument of glorifying God, and serving the church in this conference, as much, perhaps, as in any thing that he ever did, except preaching the gospel. And some who were adversaries to the cause he pleaded, though not con-



vinced by his arguments; yet by his great meekness and humility, and by the excellent Christian spirit which he manifested, were brought to entertain a better opinion of him, and the way in which he walked.

The conference was broken off, rather abruptly, for while the bishop and Mr. Henry were earnestly engaged in an argument, Mr. Roberts, whispered to Mr. Henry to let the bishop have the last word, which one of the magistrates overhearing, said, "You say my lord shall have the last word, but he shall not, for I will. We thank God that we have the sword of power in our own hands, and by the grace of God we will keep it; and it shall not rust; and I hope every lawful magistrate will do as I do. And look to yourselves, gentlemen, by the grace of God, I'll root you out of the country." To which a forward man replied, "Amen, throw them down stairs." The bishop remained silent; but the mayor of the town took order for their safety.

Two days afterwards the bishop wrote a very obliging letter to Mr. Henry, to signify to him how much he was pleased with the good temper and spirit he found in him, at

Oswestry; and that he looked upon him as one that intended well but laboured under prejudices; and to desire further acquaintance and conversation with him; and requested particularly, that he would come to him to Wrexham. About three months afterwards, he sent for him again, to Chester. At both of which interviews, they had a great deal of discourse with much freedom; in which they seemed to vie with each other, in candour and obligingness; showing to each other all meekness. The bishop even condescended to show him his plan for the government of his diocese, of which Mr. Henry expressed his approbation, but pleasantly told him to take heed not to verify again, Juvenal's remark:

“Dat veniam corvis, vexat censura columbas.”

*Pardon is given to the crows, but censure vexes the doves.”*

The bishop smiled and said he would take care to avoid that. His lordship observing his true catholic charity and moderation, told him, if he had him in his diocese, he did not question but that he should find out some way to make him useful. But all his reasonings

could not satisfy Mr. Henry of the lawfulness of being re-ordained, and conforming to the established worship.

Mr. Henry found it necessary again to contract his sails and confine himself very much at home; for although, in 1682, the dissenters enjoyed some liberty; yet in the following year, their meetings were generally suppressed throughout the kingdom. He continued his attendance at Whitewell Chapel; and on a certain day, when he was present the curate preached a bitter sermon against the dissenters, in the morning, and some people expressed their surprise that Mr. Henry would attend again in the afternoon, to whom he replied, "If he do not know his duty, I know mine, and I bless God, I can find honey in a carcase."

During this time of treading down and perplexity, he thought it best to remain quietly at home; being forced—as he used to express it, "to throw the plough under the hedge." At home he preached constantly, without disturbance, and would say, "When we cannot keep open shop, we must drive a secret trade." "There is," he observed, "a mean, if we could put it between foolhardi-

ness, and faint heartedness." One of his friends in London earnestly solicited him to make a visit to that place, in this time of restraint in the country. To whom he thus wrote. "I should be glad once more to kiss my native soil, though it were but with a kiss of valediction; but my indisposedness to travel, and the small prospect there is of doing good to countervail the pains, are my prevailing arguments against it. I am here, it is true, buried alive, but I am quiet in my grave, and have no mind to be a walking ghost. We rejoice, and desire to be thankful that God hath given us a house and continued it to us, when so many better than we, have not where to lay their heads, 'having no certain dwelling place.' Why are they exiles and not we? [It was at the dispersion of the French Protestants.] Why are they strangers in a strange land, and not we? We must not say, 'we will die in our nests,' lest God say, nay; our times and all our ways are at his disposal, absolutely and universally; and it is very well they are so."

When the duke of Monmouth, in 1685, made his descent, and the insurrection had taken place in the west, Mr. Henry and many

others were apprehended by a warrant from the deputy lieutenant, and sent under a guard to Chester Castle; where he was about three weeks, a close prisoner. He was lodged with some gentlemen and ministers that were brought thither out of Lancashire, who were all strangers to him; but he had great comfort in the acquaintance and society of many of them. He often spoke of this imprisonment, not as a matter of complaint, but of thanksgiving, and blessed God that he was nothing uneasy all the while. In a sermon preached to his family after his return home, he expressed himself in the following manner, "That his imprisonment was for no cause; 'tis guilt that makes a prison. That it was his security in a time of danger; that he had good company in his sufferings, who prayed together, and read the Scriptures together, and discoursed to their mutual edification; that he enjoyed health there—not 'sick and in prison;' that he was visited and prayed for, by his friends; that he was very cheerful and easy in his spirit; many a time asleep and quiet, when his adversaries were disturbed and unquiet. That his enlargement was speedy and unsought for,

and that it gave occasion to the magistrates who committed him, to give it under their hands, that they had nothing, in particular, to lay to his charge; and especially, that it was without a snare, which was the thing he feared more than any thing else.”

It was a surprise to some who visited him, in his imprisonment, and were big with the expectation of the duke of Monmouth's success, to hear him say, “I would not have you to flatter yourselves with such hopes; for God will not do his work for us, in these nations, by that man; but our deliverance and salvation will arise some other way.”

When men became inimical to him, instead of manifesting proud resentment, or as is usual, putting on a cold and distant face; he took special pains to treat such with all courtesy and kindness. And when a gentleman who had been very unfriendly to him, needed his assistance in a law-suit, though he might have declined, and it would have been for his interest to do so; yet he appeared as a witness for him, which conduct so won upon this person, that he ever afterwards was more friendly in his treatment of him. And

when he heard of the death of one that had been his professed enemy, he said, "God knows that I have often prayed for him."

Some have wondered to see how courteously he would speak to such as had injured him, when he met with them, being as industrious to discover his forgiving of wrongs, as some are to discover their resentments of them. It was said of archbishop Cranmer, that the way to have him for one's friend, was, to do him an unkindness; and it might surely be said of Mr. Henry, that the doing him an injury would not make him an enemy. In this he resembled his worthy friend, Mr. Lawrence, who in company with some of his sons, passing by the house of a gentleman that had been injurious towards him, he gave a charge to his sons that they should never think or speak ill of that gentleman, for the sake of any thing he had done against him; but whenever they went by his house, to lift up their hearts in prayer to God for him, and his family. And who is he that will harm those who are thus followers of him that is good in his goodness.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The last nine years of his life, when he enjoyed liberty and enlargement at Broad Oak. From the year 1687.

WHEN out of favour to the Roman Catholics, King James II. gave a general indulgence to all dissenters, it was a question much agitated, whether conscientious men could with propriety avail themselves of this liberty, since it was no longer doubtful what the motives were which induced the government to remove the restraints which had been laid upon them. Mr. Henry, after a full consideration of the subject in the light of the examples of the saints recorded in Scripture, came to the conclusion that it was lawful and right for him to use the liberty granted in preaching the gospel. He said, "whatever men's ends are in it, I believe God's ends are to do us good." Another maxim which he applied to existing circumstances was, "Duty is ours, events are God's." He remembered, that the indulgence granted in King Charles' time had been the occasion of good; and why might not this do so too? "Did Jeremiah sit still in the prison because



his liberty was granted by the king of Babylon? Did not Paul appeal to Cæsar, when persecuted by his own countrymen for preaching the gospel, and find more kindness at Rome, than he did at Jerusalem? And although he believed that the repeal of the penal laws was intended to introduce popery; yet he thought that there could be no more effectual barrier against popery, than the powerful and faithful preaching of the gospel; and the refusal of the indulgence by the dissenters would have no effect in preventing its effect in favour of the papists. Commissioners were sent through the country to ascertain the losses sustained by dissenters, in consequence of the execution of the act of uniformity, and the five mile, and conventicle acts, and they applied to him to furnish an account of his damages, but he declined giving any, saying that he had long since forgiven those that injured him. A commission was also sent to him to be a justice of the peace, which office he respectfully declined, as he felt himself to be unworthy of the honour, and unfit for the office.

It was with much fear and trembling, that Mr. Henry received the account of the land-

ing of the prince of Orange, in 1688, as being somewhat in the dark concerning the clearness of his call, and dreading what might be the consequence of it. He used to pray, "Give peace in our time, O Lord." But when secret things were brought to light, and a regular course was taken to fill the throne with such a king, and such a queen, none rejoiced in it more heartily than he did. He celebrated the national thanksgiving with an excellent sermon, from Rom. viii. 31, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Soon after the revolution was accomplished, there was a scheme set on foot to comprehend the moderate dissenters, in the establishment of the church of England, which Mr. Henry most earnestly desired and wished for, if it could be had on any terms less than sinning against his conscience; for never was any man more averse to every thing which tended to separation. To promote this desirable object his prayers and endeavours were unceasing, until it was found to be impracticable. Despairing, therefore, to see an accommodation, he set himself the more vigorously to improve the present liberty. In the year 1689, the act of tolera-

tion was passed, which not only allowed the dissenters' meetings, but took them under the protection of the government.

It may be of use to give some account how he managed his ministerial work in the latter part of his time, wherein he had as signal tokens of the presence of God with him, as ever, enabling him still to bring forth fruit in an old age, and to renew his youth like the eagles. Though what he did he still did gratis and would do so, yet he was not willing to have any constant assistant, nor had he any; so much was he in his element, when he was about his Master's work: 'twas his meat and drink to do it.

1. As to his constant Sabbath work, he was uniform and abundant in it. He began his morning family worship on Lord's days, at eight o'clock, when he read and expounded pretty largely, sung a psalm and prayed; and many strove to come time enough to join with him in that service. He began in public just at nine o'clock winter and summer. His meeting place was an out-building of his own, near adjoining to his house, fitted up very decently and conveniently for the purpose. He begun with prayer, then

he sung Psal. c. without reading the line; next he read and expounded a chapter in the Old Testament in the morning, and in the New Testament in the afternoon. He looked upon the public reading of the Scriptures in religious assemblies to be an ordinance of God, and that it tended very much to the edification of people by that ordinance, to have what is read expounded to them. The bare reading of the word, he used to compare to the throwing of a net into the water; but the expounding of it is like the spreading out of that net, which makes it the more likely to catch fish; especially as he managed it with practical, profitable observations. Some that have heard him read a chapter with this thought, how will he make such a chapter as this useful to us? have been surprised with such pertinent, useful instructions, as they have owned to be as much for their edification as any sermon. And commonly when he had expounded a chapter, he would desire them when they came home to read it over, and recollect some of those things that had been spoken to them out of it.

In his expounding of the Old Testament, he industriously sought for something in it

concerning Christ, who is the true treasure hid in the field, the true manna hid in the dew of the Old Testament. Take one instance; the last Sabbath that ever he spent with his children at Chester, in the public morning worship, he read and expounded the last chapter of the book of Job: after he had gone through the chapter, and observed what he thought fit out of it, he expressed himself to this purpose: "When I have read a chapter in the Old Testament, I used to inquire what there is in it that points at Christ, or is any way applicable to Christ; here is in this chapter a great deal of Job; but is there nothing of Christ here? Yes; you have heard of the patience of Job, and have in him seen the end of the Lord. This in Job is applicable to Christ, that after he had patiently gone through his sufferings, he was appointed an intercessor for his unkind friends, ver. 8." 'Go to my servant Job, and my servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept.' "If any one hath an errand to God, let him go to Jesus Christ, and put it into his hand, for there is no acceptance to be hoped for with God, but by him, who is his beloved Son; not only with whom he is well pleased,

but in whom, viz. with us in him, he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

After the exposition of the chapter he sung a psalm, and commonly chose a psalm suitable to the chapter he had expounded; and would briefly tell his hearers how they might sing that psalm with understanding, and what affections of soul should be working towards God in the singing of it: his hints of that kind were of great use, and contributed much to the right performance of that service; he often said, “The more singing of psalms there is in our families and congregations on Sabbath days, the more like they are to heaven, and the more there is in them of the everlasting Sabbath.” He would say sometimes he loved to sing whole psalms, rather than pieces of psalms.

After the sermon in the morning, he sung the cxvii. Psalm, without reading the line.

He intermitted at noon about an hour and a half, and on sacrament days not near so long, in which time he took some little refreshment in his study, making no formal dinner; yet many of his friends did partake of his carnal, as well as of his spiritual things, as those did that followed Christ, of whom

he was careful they should not faint by the way. The morning sermon was repeated, by a ready writer, to those that staid in the meeting place, as many did, and when that was done, he begun the afternoon's exercise; in which he not only read and expounded a chapter, but catechized the children, and expounded the catechism briefly before sermon. Thus did he go from strength to strength, and from duty to duty, on Sabbath days: running the ways of God's commandments with an enlarged heart. And the variety, and vivacity of his public services, made them exceedingly pleasant to all that joined with him, who never had cause to complain of his being tedious. He used to say, "Every minute of Sabbath time is precious, and none of it to be lost;" and that he scarce thought the Lord's day well spent, if he were not weary in body at night; wearied with his work but not weary of it, as he used to distinguish. He would say sometimes to those about him, when he had gone through the duties of a Sabbath; "Well if this be not the way to Heaven, I do not know what is."

In pressing people to number their days,

he would especially exhort them to number their Sabbath days, how many they have been, and how ill they have been spent; how few 'tis like they may be, that they may be spent better: and to help in the account, he would say, that "for every twenty years of our lives, we enjoy above a thousand Sabbaths," which must all be accounted for in the day of reckoning.

As to his constant preaching, it was very substantial and elaborate, and greatly to edification. He used to say, he could not starch in his preaching; that is, he would not; as knowing where the language and expression is stiff, and forced, and fine (as they call it) it doth not reach the greatest part of the hearers. When he grew old, he would say, surely he might now take a greater liberty to talk (as he called it) in the pulpit; that is, to speak familiarly to people; yet to the last he abated not in his preparation for the pulpit, nor ever delivered any thing raw and undigested; much less any thing unbecoming the gravity and seriousness of the work. If his preaching were talking, it were talking to the purpose. His sermons were not common place, but even when his subjects were the most



plain and trite, yet his management of them was usually peculiar and surprising. In those years, as formerly, he kept for the most part in a method for subjects, and was very seldom above one Sabbath upon a text. And his constant practice was, as it had been before, when he concluded a subject that he had been a good while upon, he spent one Sabbath in a brief rehearsal of the marrow and substance of the many sermons he preached upon it; which he called the clinching of the nail, that it might be as a nail in a sure place. So very industrious was he, and no less ingenious in his endeavours, that his hearers might be "able, after his decease, to have these things always in remembrance," 2 Pet. i. 15, and it is hoped, that by the blessing of God, the effect did not altogether disappoint his expectation. In the latter times of his ministry, he would often contrive the heads of his sermons to begin with the same letter, or rather two and two of a letter; but he did not at all seem to affect or force it; only if it fell in naturally and easily, he thought it a good help to memory, and of use, especially to the younger sort. And he would say, the chief reason why he did it

was, because 'tis frequently observed in the Scripture, particularly the book of Psalms. And though it be not a fashionable ornament of discourse, if it be a Scripture ornament, that is sufficient to recommend it, at least to justify it against the imputation of childishness. But the excellency of his sermons lay chiefly in the enlargements, which were always very solid, grave, and judicious; but in expressing and marshalling his heads, he often condescended below his own judgment, to help his hearers' memories. Some of his subjects (when he had finished them) he made some short memorandums of in verse, a distich or two of each Sabbath's work, and gave them out in writing, among the young ones of his congregation, many of whom wrote them, and learned them, and profited by them.

It might be of use (especially to those who had the happiness of sitting under his ministry) to give some account of the method of his Sabbath subjects, during the last eight or nine years of his ministry; and it was designed, till 'twas found 'twould swell this narrative into too great a bulk.

2. As to the administration of the sacra-

ments, those mysteries of God, which ministers are the stewards of.

As to the sacrament of baptism, he had never (that I know of) baptized any children (except his own) from the time he was turned out in 1662, till this last liberty came, though often desired to do it: but now he revived the administration of that ordinance in his congregation. The occasion was this: one of the parish ministers preaching at Whitewell chapel, Mr. Henry and his family, and many of his friends being present, was earnestly cautioning people not to go to conventicles, and used this as an argument against it, "That they were baptized into the church of England:" Mr. Henry's catholic charity could not well digest this monopolizing of the great ordinance of baptism, and thought it time to bear his testimony against such narrow principles, which he ever expressed his dislike of in all parties and persuasions. Accordingly he took the next opportunity that offered itself, publicly to baptize a child, and desired the congregation to bear witness, "That he did not baptize that child into the church of England, nor into the church of Scotland, nor into the church

of the dissenters, nor into the church at Broad Oak, but into the visible catholic church of Jesus Christ." After this he baptized very many, and always publicly, though being in the country they were commonly carried a good way. The public administration of baptism he not only judged most agreeable to the nature and end of the ordinance, but found to be very profitable and edifying to the congregation; for he always took that occasion, not only to explain the nature of the ordinance, but affectionately and pathetically to excite people duly to improve their baptism. He usually received the child immediately out of the hands of the parent that presented it, and returned it into the same hands again, with this or the like charge, "Take this child, and bring it up for God." He used to say, that one advantage of public baptism was, that there were many to join in prayer for the child, in which therefore, and in blessing God for it, he was usually very large and particular. After he had baptized the child, before he gave it back to the parent, he commonly used these words: "We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's church, having washed

it with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, in token that hereafter it shall not be ashamed to confess Christ crucified, and manfully to fight," &c.

He baptized many adult persons, that through the error of their parents were not baptized in infancy, and some in public.

The solemn ordinance of the Lord's supper he constantly celebrated in his congregation once a month, and always to a very considerable number of communicants. He did not usually observe public days of preparation for that ordinance, other than as they fell in course in the weekly lectures; nor did he ever appropriate any particular subject of his preaching to sacrament days, having a great felicity in adapting any profitable subject to such an occasion: and he would say, What did the primitive Christians do, when they celebrated the Lord's supper every Lord's day? His administration of this ordinance was very solemn and affecting. He had been wont to go about in the congregation, and to deliver the elements with his own hands; but in his latter time, he delivered them only to those near him, and so they

were handed from one to another, with the assistance of one who supplied the office of a deacon, as having also the custody and disposal of the money gathered for the use of the poor; Mr. Henry taking and carefully keeping a particular account of it.

Such as desired to be admitted to the Lord's supper, he first discoursed with concerning their spiritual state; and how the case stood between God and their souls; not only to examine them, but to instruct and teach them, and to encourage them as he saw occasion; gently leading those whom he discerned to be serious, though weak and timorous: he usually discoursed with them more than once, as finding precept upon precept, and line upon line necessary: but he did it with so much mildness, and humility, and tenderness, and endeavour to make the best of every body, as did greatly affect and win upon many. He was herein like our great Master, who "can have compassion on the ignorant, and doth not "despise the day of small things."

But his admission of young people out of the rank of catechumens into that of communicants, had a peculiar solemnity in it. Such

as he catechized, when they grew up to some years of discretion, if he observed them to be intelligent and serious, and to set their faces heavenwards: he marked them out to be admitted to the Lord's supper; and when he had a competent number of such, twelve or fifteen perhaps, or more he ordered each of them to come to him severally, and discoursed with them of the things belonging to their everlasting peace: put it to their choice whom they would serve: and endeavoured to affect them with those things with which by their catechisms they had been made acquainted: drawing them with the cords of a man, and the bands of love, into the way which is called holy. For several Lord's days he catechized them, particularly in public, touching the Lord's supper, and the duty of preparation for it, and their baptismal covenant, which in that ordinance they were to take upon themselves, and to make their own act and deed. Often telling them upon such occasions, that they were not to oblige themselves to any more than what they were already obliged to by their baptism, only to bind themselves faster to it. Then he appointed a day in the week

before the ordinance; when in a solemn assembly on purpose, he prayed for them, and preached a sermon to them, proper to their age and circumstances: and so the following Sabbath they were all received together to the Lord's supper. This he looked upon as the right confirmation, or transition, into the state of adult church membership. The more solemn our covenanting with God is, the more deep and the more durable the impressions are likely to be. He has recorded it in his diary, upon one of these occasions, as his heart's desire and prayer for those who were thus admitted, "That it might be as the day of their espousals to the Lord Jesus, and that they might each of them have a wedding garment."

3. The discipline he observed in his congregation was, not such as he could have wished for, but the best he could get, considering what a scattered flock he had, which was his trouble, but it could not be helped. He would sometimes apply to the circumstances he was in, that of Moses, Deut. xii. 8, 9. However, I see not but the end was effectually attained by the methods he took, though there wanted the formality of officers



and church meetings for the purpose. If he heard of any that walked disorderly, he sent for them, and reproved them, gently or sharply, as he saw the case required. If the sin had scandal in it, he suspended them from the ordinance of the Lord's supper, till they gave some tokens of their repentance and reformation. And where the offence was public and gross, his judgment was, that some public satisfaction should be made to the congregation before re-admission. But whatever offence did happen, or breaches of the Christian peace, Mr. Henry's peculiar excellency lay in restoring with the spirit of meekness; which, with his great prudence, and love, and condescension, did so much command the respect of his people, and win upon them, that there was a universal satisfaction in all his management; and it may truly be said of him, as it was of David, 2 Sam. iii. 36, that "whatsoever he did pleased all the people." And it is an instance and evidence that those ministers who will rule by love and meekness, need no laws or canons to rule by, other than those of the holy Scripture. "How forcible are right words!" Job vi. 25.

4. He was very strict and very serious in observing the public fasts appointed by authority, and called them a delight. He had seldom any one to assist him in carrying on the duties of those days, but performed the service of them himself alone. He began at nine of the clock, or quickly after, and never stirred out of the pulpit till about four in the afternoon, spending all that time in praying and expounding, and singing, and preaching, to the admiration of all that heard him, who were generally more on such days than usual. And he was sometimes observed to be more warm and lively towards the latter end of the duties of a fast day, than at the beginning; as if the spirit were most willing and enlarged when the flesh was most weak. In all his performances on public fast days, he did, *hoc agere*, attend to that which was the proper work of the day; every thing is beautiful in its season. His prayers and pleadings with God on those days, were especially for national mercies, and the pardon of national sins: how excellently did he order the cause before God, and fill his mouth with arguments in his large and particular intercessions for the land, for the king, the go-

vernment, the army, the navy, the church, the French Protestants, &c. He was another Jacob, a wrestler, an Israel, a prince with God. Before a fast day he would be more than ordinarily inquisitive concerning the state of public affairs, as Nehemiah was, Neh. i. 2, that he might know the better how to order his prayers and preaching: for on such a day (he hath sometimes said) "as good say nothing, as nothing to the purpose." He made it his business on fast days, to show people their transgressions, especially the house of Jacob their sins. "'Tis most proper (said he) to preach of Christ on Lord's days, to preach of sin on fast days, and to preach duty on both. He went over the third chapter of the Revelation, in the fast sermons of two years. Another year he preached over the particulars of that charge, Zeph. iii. 2. Hypocrisy in hearers, and flattery in preachers (as he would sometimes say) is bad at any time, but it is especially abominable upon a day of humiliation.

5. He preached a great many lectures in the country about, some stated, some occasional, in supplying of which he was very indefatigable. He hath sometimes preached a lec-

ture, ridden eight or nine miles, and preached another, and the next day two more: to quicken himself to diligence he would often say, "our opportunities are passing away, and we must work while it is day, for the night cometh." Once having very wet and foul weather to go through to preach a lecture, he said, he comforted himself with two Scriptures; one was 2 Tim. ii. 3, "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." The other (because he exposed and hazarded his health, for which some blamed him) was 2 Sam. vi. 21. "It was before the Lord." He took all occasions in his lectures abroad, to possess the minds of people with sober and moderate principles, and to stir them up to the serious regard of those things wherein we are all agreed. "We are not met here together (said he once in an exhortation, with which he often began at his lecture) because we think ourselves better than others, but because it is our desire to be better than we are."

He was very happy in the choice of his subjects for his week day lectures. At one which was stated, he preached against errors in general, from James i. 16, "Do not err my

beloved brethren;" particularly from divers other Scriptures he showed, that we must not err, concerning God and Christ, and the Spirit; concerning sin and repentance, faith and good works; concerning God's ordinances; concerning grace and peace, and afflictions and prosperity, and the things of the life to come.

At the monthly lectures he delivered at his own house, he chose to preach upon the four last things, death and judgment, heaven and hell, in many particulars, but commonly a new text for every sermon. When he had in many sermons finished the first of the four, one that used to hear him sometimes, inquiring of his progress in his subjects, asked him if he had done with death? meaning that subject concerning death; to which he pleasantly replied, "No, I have not done with him yet; I must have another turn with him, and he will give me a fall; but I hope to have the victory at last." He would sometimes remove the lectures in the country from one place to another, for the benefit of those that could not travel. Once having adjourned a lecture to a new place, he began it there with a sermon on Acts xvii. 6, "These men

that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also;" in which he showed how false the charge is as they meant it; for religion doth not disturb the peace of families or societies, doth not cause any disorder or unquietness, &c. And yet, that in another sense there is a great truth in it; that when the gospel comes in power to any soul, it turns the world upside down in that soul; such is the change it makes there.

All this he did gratis, and without being burthensome to any; nay, he was best pleased, when at the places where he preached, nothing was got for his entertainment, but he came home (though some miles) fasting; as in other places it was a trouble to him to see his friends careful about much serving, though it was out of their respect to him.

*Lastly*, As he was an excellent preacher himself, so he was an exemplary hearer of the word, when others preached, though every way his inferiors; so reverent, serious, and attentive, was he in hearing, and so observant of what was spoken. I have heard him tell, that he knew one (and I suppose it was as Paul knew a man in Christ) who could truly say, to the glory of God, that for

forty years he had never slept at a sermon. He was diligent also to improve what he heard afterwards by meditations, repetition, prayer, and discourse; and he was a very great encourager of young ministers that were humble and serious, though their abilities and performances were but mean. He has noted in his diary, (as that which affected him,) this saying of a godly man, a hearer of his, "I find it easier to go six miles to hear a sermon, than to spend one quarter of an hour in meditating and praying over it in secret (as I should) when I come home."

As to the circumstances of his family in the last nine years of his life, they were somewhat different from what they had been; but the same candle of God which had shined upon his tabernacle continued still to do so. In the years 1687, and 1688, he married all his five children; the three eldest in four months time, in the year 1687, and the other two in a year and a half after; so many swarms, (as he used to call them) out of his hive; and all not only with his full consent, but to his abundant comfort and satisfaction. He would say, he thought it the duty of parents to study to

oblige their children in that affair. And though never could children be more easy and at rest in a father's house than his were, yet he would sometimes say concerning them, as Naomi to Ruth, Ruth iii. 1, "Shall I not seek rest for thee?" Two advices he used to give, both to his children and others, in their choice of that relation: one was, "Keep within the bonds of profession," such as one may charitably hope is from a good principle. The other was, "Look at suitableness," in age, quality, education, temper, &c. He used to observe from Gen. ii. 18, "I will make him a help meet for him;" that where there is not meetness, there will not be much help. And he would commonly say to his children, with reference to that choice, "Please God, and please yourselves, and you shall never displease me;" and greatly blamed those parents, who conclude matches for their children, and do not ask counsel at their mouth. He never aimed at great things in the world for his children, but sought for them in the first place the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof. He used to mention sometimes the saying of a pious gentlewoman, that had many daughters:



“The care of most people, is how to get good husbands for their daughters; but my care is to fit my daughters to be good wives, and then let God provide for them.” In this, as in other things, Mr. Henry steered by that principle; that “a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth.” And it pleased God so to order it, that all his children were disposed of, into circumstances very agreeable and comfortable, both for life and godliness. He was greatly affected with the goodness of God to him herein, without any forecast or contrivance of his own. “The country (says he in his diary) takes notice of it, and what then shall I render?” Surely this is a token for good.

All his four daughters were married at Whitewell chapel, and he preached a wedding sermon for each of them, in his own family, after. He would often tell his friends, that those who desire, in the married condition, to live in the favour of God, must enter upon that condition in the fear of God. For it is an ill omen to stumble at the threshold: and an error in the first concoction, is seldom amended in the second.

While he lived, he had much comfort in all his children and their yoke-fellows, and somewhat the more, that by the Divine Providence, four of the five families which branched out of his, were settled in Chester.

His youngest daughter was married April 26, 1688, the same day of the year (as he observes in his diary) and the same day of the week, and in the same place that he was married to his dear wife, twenty-eight years before; upon which this is his remark, "I cannot desire for them, that they should receive more from God than we have received, in that relation and condition; but I would desire, and do desire, that they may do more for God in it than we have done." His usual compliment to his new-married friends, was, Others wish you all happiness, I wish you all holiness, and then there is no doubt but you will have all happiness.

When the marriage of the last of his daughters was about to be concluded on, he thus writes: "But is Joseph gone, and Simeon gone, and must Benjamin go also? we will not say that all these things are against us, but for us: if we must be thus in this merciful way bereaved of our children, let us be

bereaved; and God turn it for good to them, as we know he will if they love and fear his name." And when, some time after she was married, he parted with her to the house of her husband, he thus writes: "We have sent her away, not as Laban said he would have sent his daughters away, with mirth and with songs, with tabret, and with harp, but with prayers and tears, and hearty good wishes." "And now (says he in his diary) we are alone again, as we were in our beginning; God be better to us than twenty children." Upon the same occasion he thus writes to a dear relation: "We are now left as we were, one and one, and yet but one; the Lord, I trust, that has brought us thus far, will enable us to finish well; and then all will be well, and not till then."

That which he often mentioned, as the matter of his great comfort that it was so, and his desire that it might continue so, was, the love and unity that was among his children; and that (as he writes) the transplanting of them into new relations, had not lessened that love, but rather increased it; for this he often gave thanks to the God of love; noting from Job. i. 4, That the children's love

to one another is the parents' comfort and joy. In his last will and testament, this is the prayer which he puts up for his children, "That the Lord would build them up in holiness, and continue them still in brotherly love, as a bundle of arrows which cannot be broken."

When his children were removed from him, he was a daily intercessor at the throne of grace for them and their families. Still the burnt offerings were offered according to the number of them all. He used to say, "Surely, the children of so many prayers will not miscarry." Their particular circumstances of affliction and danger, were sure to be mentioned by him with suitable petitions. The greatest affliction he saw in his family was the death of his dear daughter-in-law, Catharine, the only daughter of Samuel Hardware, Esq., who, about a year and a half after she was transplanted into his family (to which she was the greatest comfort and ornament imaginable) died of the small-pox in child-bed, upon the thanksgiving day for King William's coming in. She died but a few weeks after Mr. Henry had married the last of his daughters, upon which marriage she had said,

“Now we have a full lease, God only knows which life will drop first.” She comforted herself in the extremity of her illness with this word, “Well, when I come to heaven, I shall see that I could not have been without this affliction.” She had been for some time before under some fears as to her spiritual state, but the clouds were through grace dispelled, and she finished her course with joy, and a cheerful expectation of the glory to be revealed. When she lay ill, Mr. Henry (being in fear not only for her that was ill, but for the rest of his children in Chester, who had none of them past the pikes of that perilous distemper) wrote thus to his son, on the evening of the Lord’s day, “I have just done the public work of this day, wherein, before many scores of witnesses, many of whom I dare say, are no little concerned for you. I have absolutely, freely, and unreservedly given you all up to the good will and pleasure of our heavenly Father, waiting what he will do with us, for good I am sure we have received, and shall we not receive evil also? He preached at Chester, upon occasion of that sad breach in his family, on Job

x. 3, "Show me wherefore thou contendest with me."

When two of his children lay ill, and in perilous circumstances, after he had been wrestling with God in prayer for them, he wrote thus in his diary: "If the Lord will be pleased to grant me my request this time concerning my children, I will not say as the beggars at our door used to do, I'll never ask any thing of him again; but, on the contrary, he shall hear oftener from me than ever; and I will love God the better, and love prayer the better, as long as I live." He used to say, tradesmen take it ill, if those that are in their books go to another shop; while we are so much indebted to God for past mercies, we are bound to attend him for further mercies.

As he was an intercessor for his children at the throne of grace, so he was upon all occasions a remembrancer to them, both by word and letter, to quicken them to that which is good. How often did he inculcate this upon them? "Love one another, and the God of love and peace will be with you. Do all you can, while you are together, to

help one another to heaven, that you may be together there, for ever, and with the Lord." When the families of his children were in health and peace, the candle of God shining upon their tabernacles, he wrote thus to them, "'Twas one of Job's comforts in his prosperity, that his children loved one another, and feasted together: the same is ours in you, which God continue. But you will not be offended, if we pray that you may none of you curse God in your hearts. Remember the wheel is always in motion, and the spoke that is uppermost will be under, and therefore mix tremblings always with your joy."

He much rejoiced in the visits of his children, and made that as other things, which were the matter of his rejoicing, the matter of his thanksgiving. His usual saying at parting, was, "This is not the world we are to be together in, and 'tis well it is not; but there is such a world before us:" and his usual prayer was, "that our next meeting might be either in heaven, or further on in our way towards it."

He had in eight years time twenty-four grand-children born, some by each of his

children; concerning whom he would often bless God, that they were all "the sealed ones of the God of heaven, and enrolled among his lambs." On the birth of his second grand-child, at a troublesome time as to public affairs, he thus writes, "I have now seen my children's children, let me also see peace upon Israel; and then I will say, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart." Some were much affected with it, when he baptized two of his grand-children together at Chester, publicly, and preached on Gen. xxxiii. 5, "They are the children which God hath graciously given thy servant." He observed in what a savory, pious, gracious manner Jacob speaks. He had spoken good sense if he had only said, they are my children; but then he had not spoken like Jacob, like one that had so lately seen the face of God. Though our speech be not always of grace, yet it must be always with grace, grace poured into the lips. There is a kind of language, the air of which speaks it the language of Canaan; Christians should speak like Christians.

It was not long after his children were married from him, but his house was filled again



with the children of his friends, several of whom he was, by much importunity persuaded to take to table with him. All that knew him, thought it a thousand pities, that such a master of a family should have but a small family, and should not have many to sit down under his shadow. He was first almost necessitated to it, by the death of his dear friend and kinsman, Mr. Benyon of Ash, who left his children to his care. Some he took gratis, or for small consideration; and when by reason of the advances of age he could not go about so much as he had done, doing good, he laid out himself to do the more at home. He kept a teacher to attend their school learning; and they had the benefit, not only of his inspection in that, but (which was much more) his family-worship, Sabbath instructions, catechizing and daily converse, in which his tongue was as choice silver, and his lips fed many. Nothing but the hopes of doing some good to the rising generation could have prevailed with him to take this trouble upon him. He would often say, "We have a busy house, but there is a rest remaining. We must be doing something in the world while we are in it; but

this fashion will not last long, methinks I see it passing away.”

Sometimes he had such with him as had gone through their course of University learning at private academies, and desired to spend some time in his family, before their entrance upon the ministry; that they might have the benefit, not only of his public and family instructions, but of his learned pious converse, in which, as he was thoroughly furnished, for every good word and work, so he was very free and communicative. The great thing which he used to press upon those who intended the ministry, was to study the Scriptures, and make them familiar. *Bonus textuarius est bonus theologus*, was a maxim he often reminded them of. For this purpose he recommended to them the study of the Hebrew, that they might be able to search the Scriptures in the original. He also advised them to the use of an interleaved Bible, wherein to insert such expositions and observations as occur occasionally in sermons or other books; which, he would say, are more happy and considerable sometimes, than those that are found in the professed commentators. When some young men de-

sired the happiness of coming into his family, he would tell them, "You come to me as Naaman did to Elisha, expecting that I should do this and the other for you; and alas, I can but say as he did, Go wash in Jordan;—Go, study the Scriptures. I profess to teach no other learning but Scripture learning." It was but a little before he died, that in reading Isa. l. he observed from ver. 4, "The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned," &c. That the true learning of a gospel minister consists not in being able to talk Latin fluently, and to dispute in philosophy, but in being able to speak a word in season to weary souls. He that knows how to do that well, is a learned minister.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### His Sickness, Death, and Burial.

IN the time of his health, he made death very familiar to himself by frequent and pleasing thoughts and meditations of it; and endeavoured to make it so to his friends, by speak-

ing often of it. His letters and discourses had still something or other which spoke his constant expectations of death; thus did he learn to die daily; and it is hard to say, whether it was more easy to him to speak, or uneasy to his friends to hear him speak of leaving the world. This minds me of a passage I was told by a worthy Scotch minister, Mr. Patrick Adair, that visiting the famous Mr. Durham of Glasgow, in his last sickness, which was long and lingering; he said to him, "Sir, I hope you have so set all in order, that you have nothing else to do but to die." "I bless God (said Mr. Durham) I have not had that to do either these many years." Such is the comfort of dying daily, when we come to die indeed.

Mr. Henry's constitution was but tender, and yet by the blessing of God upon his great temperance and care of his diet, and moderate exercise by walking in the air, he did for many years enjoy a good measure of health, which he used to call, "The sugar that sweetens all temporal mercies," for which therefore we ought to be very thankful, and of which we ought to be very careful. He had sometimes violent fits of the cholic,

which would be very afflictive for the time. Towards his latter end he was distressed sometimes with a pain, which his doctor thought might arise from a stone in his kidneys. Being once upon the recovery from an ill fit of that pain, he said to one of his friends that asked him how he did, "he hoped, by the grace of God, he should now be able to give one blow more to the devil's kingdom;" and often professed, "he did not desire to live a day longer than he might do God some service." He said to another, when he perceived himself recovering, "Well, I thought I had been putting into the harbour, but find I must to sea again."

He was sometimes suddenly taken with fainting fits, which, when he recovered from, he would say, "Dying is but a little more."

When he was in the sixty-third year of his age, which is commonly called the Grand climacteric, and hath been to many the dying year, and was so to his father, he numbered the days of it, from August 24, 1693, to August 25, 1694, when he finished it; and when he concluded it, he thus wrote in his diary: "This day finisheth my commonly dying year, which I have numbered the

days of; and should now apply my heart more than ever to heavenly wisdom." He was much pleased with that expression of the English liturgy in the office of burial, and frequently used it: "In the midst of life we are in death."

The infirmities of age, when they grew upon him, did very little abate his vigour and liveliness in preaching, but he seemed even to renew his youth as the eagles; as those that are planted in the house of the Lord, who still bring forth fruit in old age; not so much to show that they are upright, as to show that the Lord is upright, Psal. xcii. 14, 15. But in his latter years, travelling was very troublesome to him; and he would say, as Mr. Dod used to do, that when he thought to shake himself as at other times, he found his hair was cut; his sense of this led him to preach an occasional sermon not long before he died, on John xxi. 18, "When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself," &c. Another occasional sermon he preached when he was old, for his own comfort, and the comfort of his aged friends, on Psal. lxxi. 17, 18. "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth," &c. He observed there, that it is a blessed

thing to be taught of God from our youth; and those that have been taught of God from their youth, ought to declare his wondrous works all their days after. And those that have been taught of God from their youth, and have all their days declared his wondrous works, may comfortably expect, that when they are old he will not forsake them. Christ is a master that doth not use to cast off his old servants.

For some years before he died, he used to complain of an habitual weariness, contracted, he thought, by his standing to preach, sometimes very uneasily, and in inconvenient places, immediately after riding. He would say, Every minister was not cut out for an itinerant; and sometimes the manifest attention and affection of people in hearing, enlarged him both in length and fervency, somewhat more than his strength could well bear. It was not many months before he died, that he wrote thus to a dear relation, who inquired solicitously concerning his health: "I am always habitually weary, and expect no other till I lye down in the bed of spices." And (blessed be God) so the grave is to all the saints, since He lay in it who is

the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys. When some of his friends persuaded him to spare himself, he would say, "It's time enough to rest when I am in the grave; what were candles made for, but to burn."

It doth not appear that he had any particular presages of his death; but by many instances there were of his actual gracious expectation of it, somewhat more than ordinary for some time before. The last visit he made to his children in Chester, was in July 1695, almost a year before he died, when he spent a Lord's day there and preached on the last verse of the epistle to Philemon, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." By grace he understood not so much the good will of God towards us, as the good work of God in us, called the grace of Christ, both because he is the author and finisher of it, and because he is the pattern and samplar of it. Now "the choicest gift we can ask of God for our friend is, that this grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be with their spirit." This is the one thing needful, the better part, the root of the matter, the whole of man, the principal thing, the more excellent way, a blessing indeed,



and the thing that accompanies salvation. The grace of Christ in the spirit, enlightens and enlivens the spirit, softens and subdues the spirit, purifies and preserves the spirit, enlarges and guides the spirit, sweetens and strengthens the spirit, and therefore what can be more desirable. A spirit without the grace of Christ, is a field without a fence, a fool without understanding; it is a horse without a bridle, and a house without furniture; it is a ship without tackle, and a soldier without armour; it is a cloud without rain, and a carcass without a soul; it is a tree without fruit, and a traveller without a guide. How earnest therefore should we be in praying to God for grace, both for ourselves and for our relations! He had intended to preach upon that text, when he was at Chester the year before, but was then prevented, by a particular sad occasion, which obliged him to a funeral sermon, Divine Providence reserving that benediction (which his heart was much upon) for his valediction. The Thursday following being kept as a fast in his son's congregation at Chester, he preached on Luke xix. 41, "He beheld the city, and wept over it;" which proved his

farewell to the town, as the former was his farewell to his friends and relations in it.

It was not many weeks before he died, that he wrote thus to one of his children: "We are well here, thanks be to God, and are glad to hear that you and yours are well also, God in mercy continue it: but why should we be well always? Do we deserve it? Are there no mixtures in our obedience? Are there any persons or families at whose door sickness and death never knocked? Must the earth be forsaken for us, or the rock removed out of its place? Is it not enough that we be dealt with according to the manner of men, and that we have a promise, that it shall end well, everlastingly well?"

To another of his children, about the same time, he writes, "We are sensible that we decline apace, but the best of it is, that as time goes, eternity comes: and we are in good hope, through grace, that it will be a comfortable eternity."

It was in April 1696, a few weeks before he died, that his son's father-in-law, Robert Warburton, Esq., was gathered to his grave in peace, in a good old age. Upon the ti-

dings of whose death, Mr. Henry wrote thus to his son; "Your fathers, where are they? your father-in-law gone, and your own father going; but you have a God-father that lives for ever." He was wont sometimes to subscribe his letters, your ever-loving but not ever-living father.

It was not a month before he died, that, in a letter to his very dear and worthy friend and brother, Mr. Tallents of Shrewsbury, he had this passage: "Methinks it is strange, that it should be your lot and mine to abide so long on earth by the stuff, when so many of our friends are dividing the spoils above, but God will have it so; and to be willing to live in obedience to his holy will, is as true an act of grace, as to be willing to die when he calls, especially when life is labour and sorrow. But when it is labour and joy, service to his name, and some measure of success and comfort in serving him; when it is to stop a gap, and stem a tide, it is to be rejoiced in; 'tis heaven upon earth: nay, one would think, by the Psalmist's oft repeated plea, Psal. vi. xxx. lxxxviii. cxv. and cxviii. that it were better than to be in heaven itself; and can that be?"

A little before his sickness and death, being summer time, he had several of his children, and his children's children about him, at Broad Oak, with whom he was much refreshed, and very cheerful; but ever and anon spoke of the fashion he was in, as passing away; and often told them, he should be there but a while to bid them welcome. And he was observed frequently in prayer, to beg of God, that "he would make us ready for that which would come certainly, and might come suddenly." One asking him how he did, he answered, "I find the chips fly off apace, the tree will be down shortly."

The last time he administered the Lord's supper, a fortnight before he died, he closed the administration with that Scripture, 1 John iii. 2, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be;" nor yet, but it will shortly. The Sabbath but one before he died, being in, the course of his exposition, come to that difficult part of Scripture, the xl. of Ezekiel, and the following chapters, he said he would endeavour to explain, those prophecies to them; and added "If I do not do it now, I never shall:" and he observed, that the only pro-

phetical sermon which our Lord Jesus preached, was but a few days before he died. This many of his hearers not only reflected upon afterwards, but took notice of at that time with a concern, as having something in it more than ordinary.

On the Lord's day, June 21, 1696, he went through the work of the day with his usual vigour and liveliness. He was then preaching over the first chapter of St. Peter's second epistle, and was that day on those words, "Add to your faith virtue," ver. 5. He took virtue for Christian courage and resolution in the exercise of faith; and the last thing he mentioned in which Christians have need of courage, is in dying; "for (as he was often used to say) it is a serious thing to die, and to die is a work by itself." That day he gave notice, both morning and afternoon, with much affection and enlargement, of the public fast, which was appointed by authority the Friday following, June 26, pressing his hearers, as he used to do upon such occasions, to come in a prepared frame, to the solemn services of that day.

The Tuesday following, June 23, he rose at six o'clock, according to his custom, after

a better night's sleep than ordinary, and in wonted health. Between seven and eight o'clock he performed family worship, according to the usual manner; he expounded very largely the former half of the civ. Psalm, and sung it; but he was somewhat shorter in prayer than he used to be, being then (as it was thought) taken ill. Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he comes, shall find so doing. Immediately after prayer he retired to his chamber, not saying any thing of his illness, but was soon after found upon his bed in great extremity of pain, in his back, breast, and bowels; it seemed to be a complicated fit of the stone and cholic together, in very great extremity. The means that had been used to give him relief in his illness were altogether ineffectual; he had not the least intermission or remission of pain, neither up nor in bed, but in a continual toss. He had said sometimes, that God's Israel may find Jordan rough; but there's no remedy, they must go through it to Canaan; and would tell of a good man who used to say, he was not so much afraid of death as of dying. We know they are not the godly people, part of the description of whose condition it

is, that there are no bands in their death, and yet their end is peace, and their death gain, and they have hope in it. In this extremity he was still looking up to God, and calling upon him, who is a present help in the needful hour. When the exquisiteness of his pain forced groans and complaints from him, he would presently correct himself with a patient and quiet submission to the hand of his heavenly Father, and a cheerful acquiescence in his heavenly will. "I am ashamed (says he) of these groans, I want virtue: O for virtue when I have need of it (referring to his subject the Lord's day before) forgive me that I groan thus, and I will endeavour to silence them; but indeed my stroke is heavier than my groaning." It is true, what Mr. Baxter said in his pain, There is no disputing against sense. It was his trouble, as it was Mr. Baxter's, that by reason of his bodily pain, he could not express his inward comfort; however that was it, with which God graciously strengthened him in his soul. He said to those about him: They must remember what instructions and counsels he had given them when he was in health, for now he could say but little to

them, only to refer them to what he had said, as that which he would live and die by.

It was two or three hours after he was taken ill, before he would suffer a messenger to be sent to Chester for his son, and for the doctor, saying, he should either be better or dead, before they could come; but at last he said, as the prophet did to his importunate friends, Send. About eight o'clock that evening they came and found him in the same extremity of pain which he had been in all day. And nature, being before spent with his constant and indefatigable labours in the work of the Lord, now sunk, and did perfectly succumb under its burthen, and was quite disabled to grapple with so many hours incessant pain. What further means were then used proved fruitless, and did not answer the intention. He apprehended himself going apace, and said to his son when he came in, "O son you are welcome to a dying father: I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." His pain continued very acute, but he had peace within. I am tormented (said he once) but blessed be God not in this flame; and soon after, "I am all on fire," (when at the same time



his extreme parts were cold) but he presently added, Blessed be God it is not the fire of hell." To some of his next neighbours who came into see him (for those at a distance had not notice of his illness) he said, "O make sure work for your souls by getting an interest in Christ while you are in health; for if I had that work to do now, what would become of me? but I bless God I am satisfied." It was a caution he was often wont to give: See to it that your work be not undone, when your time is done, lest you be undone for ever.

Towards ten or eleven o'clock that night, his pulse and sight began to fail; of the latter he himself took notice, and inferred from it the near approach of his dissolution.

He took an affectionate farewell of his dear yoke-fellow, with a thousand thanks for all her love and care, and tenderness; left a blessing for all his dear children, and their dear yoke-fellows and little ones that were absent. he said to his son who sat under his head, "Son, the Lord bless you, and grant that you may do worthily in your generation, and be more serviceable to the church of God than I have been;" such was his great humility

to the last. And when his son, replied, O sir, pray for me that I may but tread in your steps; he answered, Yea, follow peace and holiness, and let them say what they will. More he would have said to bear his dying testimony to the way in which he had walked, but nature was spent, and he had not strength to express it.

His understanding and speech continued almost to the last breath, and he was still in his dying agonies calling upon God, and committing himself to him. One of the last words he said, when he found himself just ready to depart, was: "O death, where is thy——?" with that his speech faltered, and within a few minutes (after about sixteen hours illness) he quietly breathed out his precious soul, into the embraces of his dear Redeemer, whom he had trusted, and faithfully served in the work of the ministry, about forty-three years. He departed betwixt twelve and one o'clock in the morning of June 24, midsummer day, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. Happy, thrice happy he, to whom such a sudden change was no surprise, and who could triumph over death, as an unstung disarmed enemy, even when he

made so fierce an onset. He had often spoken of it as his desire, that if it were the will of God, he might not outlive his usefulness; and it pleased God to grant him his desire, and give him a short passage from the pulpit to the kingdom; from the height of his usefulness, to receive the recompense of reward. So was it ordered by Him in whose hands our times are.

After the account we have given of his great usefulness, it is easy to imagine what sorrow and mourning there was among his friends, when they heard that the Lord had taken away their master from their head. One that lived so much desired, could not but die as much lamented. The surprise of the stroke put people into a perfect astonishment; and many said, The Lord removed him so suddenly, because he would not deny the many prayers that would have been put up for his recovery, had it been known that he was in peril. One thing that aggravated this severe dispensation, and made it in the apprehension of many look the more dismal, was, this powerful intercessor was taken away just before a fast day, when he would have been wrestling mightily with God for

mercy for the land. However, it proved a fast day indeed, and a day of humiliation to that congregation, to whom an empty pulpit was an awakening sermon. The Broad Oak was then like that under which Rebekah's nurse was buried, Gen. xxxv. 8. *Allon baccuth*, the oak of weeping. They who had many a time sitten with dry eyes, under melting ordinances, could not sit so under such a melting providence, by which the Lord God called so loudly to weeping and to mourning, and to girding with sackcloth. But because Mr. Henry had been wont to give it for a rule, that weeping must not hinder sowing, a mite was cast into the treasury of the nation's prayers, and a word spoken to bring the work of the day, and the event of the day together, from 2 Kings xiii. 20.

The day following being Saturday, June 27, the earthen vessel, in which this treasure had been lodged, was laid up in the grave in Whitchurch church, attended thither with a very great company of true mourners, all the country round; many from Chester and Shrewsbury, and the towns about, came to do him honour at his death: and, besides the

floods of tears that were shed, there were abundance of testimonies given to him, by persons of all sorts, like that to Jehoiadah, 2 Chron. xxiv. 16. That he was one that had done good in Israel. And there were those who said, he was a man that nobody did or could speak evil of, except for his non-conformity. He was used to say to his relations: When I am dead, make little ado about me; a few will serve to bring me to my grave. But his mind could not be observed in that; 'twas impossible such a burning and shining light could be extinguished, but there must be a universal notice taken of it. Multitudes came unsought; not to fill their eyes (as Mr. Vines expresses it) but to empty them; nor was there any other noise there, but that of general lamentation.

That morning before the removal of the corpse, a most affectionate sermon was preached in Mr. Henry's meeting place, by his dear and worthy friend Mr. Tallents of Shrewsbury, who was eleven years older than he, and through God's goodness still survives him. He was willing to take that opportunity, to testify the great love and hon-

our that he had for Mr. Henry, whom he called a friend that is nearer than a brother.

The next day being Lord's day, Mr. Owen of Oswestry preached a most excellent sermon in the morning, agreeable to that sad occasion, upon that pathetic farewell which Elisha gave to Elijah, 2 Kings ii. 12, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof, and he saw him no more; and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them."

In the afternoon of that Sabbath, another sermon was preached by a near relation of Mr. Henry's on Heb. xi. 4, "And by it, he being dead yet speaketh."

Nor was it at home only but from abroad, that very honourable testimonies were given of him. Sir Henry Ashurst (whose great worth and usefulness the world hath been made to know, by some of the best pens of the age) besides the personal acquaintance he had with Mr. Henry, both at Borreatton and in London, had kept up a constant correspondence with him, by letter, for many years. Read the character he gave of him, in a letter to a near relation of Mr. Henry's,

upon the tidings of his death: "I need not tell you how sadly I received the doleful news of Mr. Henry's translation, who, I do think, lived the greatest example of sincere godliness, with prudence and sweetness of temper, of any I ever knew." And in another letter, not only proposing, but pressing the publication of an account of his life, he professes, he thought there was none like him in his day, at least of his acquaintance, which is known to be both of the largest and of the best: "And (says he) if Sir Fulk Grevil would have it inscribed upon his tombstone, that he was a friend to Sir Philip Sidney, I may well be pleased to have it told to the world, that I loved and honoured blessed Mr. Henry; a man of so much prudence, and withal so much sincerity, of so good a temper, so much a gentleman, and yet of such strict piety and devotedness to God, that I scarce ever knew his fellow."

Another worthy conformist, of his acquaintance, having occasion to mention him in a letter to a friend, calls him "The great, good, now glorious Mr. Henry, whose memory (says he) shall ever be precious, and even sacred to me."

Such as these were the honourable testimonies which all that knew him, and knew how to value true excellency, attended him with. It is part of the recompense of charity and moderation in this world, that it obtains a good report of all men. The kingdom of God (says the blessed apostle, Rom. xiv. 17, 18,) is not meat and drink, which were then the matters of doubtful disputation, "but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and he that in these things serveth Christ is not only acceptable to God, but approved of men;" as, on the contrary, they that judge will be judged, and with what measure we mete, it will be measured to us again. And this is the excellency of a good name, that it is out of the reach of death, and is not buried in the grave, but rather grows up from the grave.

It is not for nothing Solomon has joined this good name, which is better than precious ointment with the day of one's death, which upon that account is better than the day of one's birth, that it completes the character of those that finish their course well, and are faithful unto death; whereas a great name, like the names of the great ones of the earth,



is often withered and blemished by death. We read of those that "bear their shame when they go down to the pit, though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living," Ezek. xxxii. 35.

At a meeting of the dissenting ministers of Cheshire at Knutsford, in May, 1696, (a few weeks before Mr. Henry died) it was agreed, that their next meeting should be at Chester (though inconvenient to many of them) upon condition that he would meet them there, and give them a sermon. It was with much difficulty that he was prevailed with to promise it, but his Master called for him before the time appointed came. Mr. Flavel of Devonshire died when he was under a like appointment. But happy they that are come to the "General assembly, and church of the first born, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."

As to his bodily presence, he was of a middle stature, his complexion not approaching to any extreme, of a very pleasant aspect, and an unusual mixture of gravity and sweetness in the air of his countenance, which was the true index of his mind. When some of his friends have solicited him to have his pic-

ture drawn, he would put them off with this, that "the best picture of a minister is in the hearts of his people."



## CHAPTER X.

A miscellaneous collection of some of his sayings, observations, counsels and comforts, out of his sermons, letters and discourses.

MR. Henry, through the excess of his modesty and self diffidence, never published any of his labours to the world, nor ever fitted or prepared any of them for the press; and yet none more valued the labours of others, or rejoiced more in them; nor have I heard any complain less of the multitude of good books, concerning which he often said, that store is no sore, and he was very forward to persuade others to publish; and always expressed a particular pleasure in reading the lives, actions, and sayings of eminent men, ancient and modern, which he thought the most useful and instructive kind of writings. He was also a very candid reader of books, not apt to pick quarrels, with what he read, especially when the design appeared to be honest, and

when others would find fault, and say, this was wanting, and the other amiss, his usual excuse was, "there is nothing perfect under the sun."

It will be but a small repair of this want of the publishing of some of his works, (but I doubt it will prove the best we can make,) to glean up some few of many of his sayings, observations, and good instructions (as his remains) which we shall not marshal in any order, but give them as they occur, besides those which have been already inserted into this narrative.

It was a saying he frequently used, which has been mentioned already, that "Every creature is that to us, and only that, which God makes it to be:" and another was, "Duty is ours, events are God's:" and another was "The soul is the man," and therefore "That is always best for us, which is best for our souls:" and another was, "The devil cozens us of all our time, by cozening us of the present time."

In his thanksgivings for temporal mercies he often said, "If the end of one mercy were not the beginning of another, we were undone:" and to encourage to the work of

thanksgiving he would say, that "new mercies call for new returns of praise, and then those new returns will fetch in new mercies:" and from Psal. l. 23, "He that offers praise glorifies me, and to him that orders his conversation aright—." He observed, that thanksgiving is good, but thanks-living is better.

When he spoke of a good name, he usually described it to be a name for good things with good people. "When he spoke of contentment, he used to say, "When the mind and the condition meet, there's contentment. Now in order to that, either the condition must be brought up to the mind, and that is not only unreasonable but impossible; for as the condition rises, the mind rises with it; or else the mind must be brought down to the condition, and that is both possible and reasonable. And he observed, that no condition of life will of itself make a man content, without the grace of God; for we find Haman discontented in the court, Ahab discontented on the throne, Adam discontented in Paradise, nay (and higher we cannot go) the angels that fell discontented in heaven itself."

The three questions which he advised people to put to themselves in self-examination before the sacrament, were, What am I? What have I done? and What do I want?

He used to recommend to his friends these four Scripture arguments against sin, expressed for memory's sake in four verses, to be ready in an hour of temptation.

Is this thy kindness to thy friend?

It will be bitterness in the end.

The vows of God upon me lie;

Should such a man as I am fly?

He said there were four things which he would not for all the world have against him, The word of God, his own conscience, the prayers of the poor, and the account of godly ministers.

“He that hath a blind conscience which sees nothing, a dead conscience which feels nothing, and a dumb conscience which says nothing, is in as miserable a condition as a man can be in on this side hell.”

Preaching on 1 Pet. i. 6, “If need be you are in heaviness.” He showed what need the people of God have of afflictions. “The same that our bodies have of physic, that

our trees have of pruning, that gold and silver have of the furnace, that liquors have of being emptied from vessel to vessel, that the iron hath of a file, that the fields have of a hedge, that the child has of the rod.”

Preaching on that prayer of Christ for his disciples, John xvii. 21. “That they all may be one,” which no doubt is an answered prayer, for the Father heard him always, he showed, “That notwithstanding the many sad divisions that are in the church, yet all the saints as far as they are sanctified, are one; one in relation, one flock, one family, one building, one body, one bread: one by representation, one in image and likeness, of one inclination and disposition: one in their aims, one in their askings, one in amity and friendship, one in interest, and one in their inheritance; nay, they are one in judgment and opinion; though in some things they differ, yet those things in which they are agreed are many more, and much more considerable than those things wherein they differ. They are all of a mind concerning sin, that it is the worst thing in the world; concerning Christ that he is all in all; concerning the favour of God, that it is better than

life; concerning the world, that it is vanity; concerning the word of God that it is very precious," &c.

Preaching on Gal. i. 16, concerning the conversion of Paul, he began his sermon with this remark, to raise attention: much is said in story concerning the seven wonders of the world, the Temple of Ephesus, the Pyramids of Egypt, the Tombs of Mausoleus, &c., all of which are now no more; but I have been sometimes thinking, whether I could not name seven things which I would call the seven wonders of the church; and what do you think of these seven? are they not wonderful? 1. Our redemption by Jesus Christ, who is called Wonderful; 2. The salvation of Noah in the Ark; 3. The faith of Abraham in offering up Isaac; 4. The patience of Job; 5. The providences of God towards the nation and people of the Jews; 6. The pouring out of the Spirit upon the Apostles; 7. The conversion of Paul.

But it would be endless to gather up such passages as these out of his sermons, which were full of them, and we mention these only because they occur first.

He used to observe concerning the nation

of the Jews, that before the captivity in Babylon, no people could be more strongly addicted to idols and idolatry than they were, to admiration, considering what clear warnings they had against it. But after that captivity, never was any people more averse to idols and idolatry than they, that the promise might be fulfilled, Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? and he looked upon it, that the idolatry of the papists was one of the greatest obstructions to the Jews' conversion, which he did expect and look for, as not apprehending how the promises, Rom. xi. have yet had their full accomplishment; not that they shall again be incorporated into a people, but shall join themselves to the churches of Christ, in the several nations whither they be scattered.

The great thing that he condemned and witnessed against in the church of Rome, was their monopolizing of the church, and condemning all that are not in with their interests, which is so directly contrary to the spirit of the gospel as nothing can be more. He sometimes said, "I am too much a catholic to be a Roman catholic."



By the institutions of the gospel (he said) he knew of no holy place, one holy day, two holy sacraments, and four holy canons. Let all things be done in charity; let all things be done to edifying: let all things be done decently and in order: and let all things be done to the glory of God.

In the observations he made of God's providences, he frequently took notice in discourse with his friends, of the fulfilling of the Scripture in them; for (says he) the Scripture has many accomplishments, and is in the fulfilling every day. Speaking of a wicked son in the neighbourhood that was very undutiful to his mother, he charged some of his children to observe the providence of God concerning him; perhaps (says he) I may not live to see it, but do you take notice, whether God do not come upon him with some remarkable judgment in this life, according to the threatening implied in the reason annexed to the fifth commandment: but he himself lived to see it fulfilled not long after, in a very signal providence.

He observed from Scripture instances, as well as from some providences which he had taken notice of in his own day, That if any

began well in the ways of religion and godliness, and afterwards cast off their profession, and returned to profaneness again, usually God sets a mark of his displeasure upon them, by some visible judgment in this world; their estates ruined, their reputation blasted, their families sunk, or themselves brought to misery; so that all who passed by might say, This was an apostate. "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

He observed from Numb. x. 12. "That all our removes in this world, are but from one wilderness to another." Upon any change that is before us, we are apt to promise ourselves a Canaan, but we shall be deceived, it will prove a wilderness.

Once pressing the study of the Scriptures, he advised to take a verse of Psalm cxix. every morning to meditate upon, and so go over the psalm twice in the year, and that (said he) will bring you to be in love with all the rest of the Scripture; and he often said, "All grace grows, as love to the word of God grows."

One asking his advice, what to do when (as often unavoidably) we are in the sight

and hearing of the wickedness of the wicked, and whether we are to reprove them; why (says he) you know what an angry countenance does, and we may sometimes give a reproof by our looks, when we have not opportunity of giving it otherwise.

He would not bear that any should be evil spoken of in his hearing, it was to him as vinegar to the teeth. He would remind those who reflected upon people behind their backs, of that law, Lev. xix. 14, "Thou shalt not curse the deaf." Those that are absent are deaf, they cannot right themselves, and therefore say no ill of them. A friend of his inquiring of him concerning a matter which tended to reflect upon some people; he began to give an account of the story, but immediately broke off, and checked himself with these words, "But our rule is, to speak evil of no man," and would proceed no further in the story. It was but a week before he died, that one desired him to lend him such a book; "Truly (says he) I would lend it you, but that it rakes in the faults of some, which should rather be covered with a mantle of love." It were easy to multiply instances of this.

To quicken people to diligence and liveliness in the worship of God, he would sometimes observe, that the temple was built upon a threshing floor, a place of labour. He would also urge, that in answer to those who turned it to his reproach, that his meeting-place had been a barn; no new thing (would he say) to turn a threshing floor into a temple.

When some zealous people in the country would have him to preach against top-knots, and other vanities in apparel, he would say, that was none of his business; if he could but persuade people to Christ, the pride and vanity and excess of those things would fall of course; and yet he had a dislike to vanity and gaiety of dress, and allowed it not in those that he had influence upon. His rule was, that in such things we must neither be owls nor apes; not affect singularity, nor affect modishness; nor (as he used to observe from 1 Pet. iii. 3,) make the putting on of apparel our adorning, because Christians have better things to adorn themselves with. When some complained to him of a relation of theirs, that would not let them dress his children with ribbands, and other fine things,

“why truly (said Mr. Henry) those things are fit for children;” thereby reproofing both him that would not allow them to his children, and them that perhaps minded them too much themselves.

He often, both in sermons and discourses, would press people to fix to themselves some good principles, and to come off from the corrupt and carnal principles that worldly people go by. He took all occasions to recommend such principles as these: “That God who is the first and best, should have the first and best; that a part in Christ is a good part; that soul prosperity is the best prosperity, and that it is well or ill with us, according as it is well or ill with our souls; that honesty is the best policy; that those that would have the comfort of relations, must be careful to do the duty of them; that all is well that ends everlastingly well; that time and the things of time, are nothing compared with eternity and the things of eternity; that it is better to suffer the greatest affliction than to commit the least sin; that it highly concerns us to do that now, which we shall most wish we had done when we come to die; that work for God is its own wages; that it is folly for

a man to do that which he must certainly undo again by repentance, or be undone to all eternity." Such as these were the principles he would have Christians to govern themselves by.

Speaking of the causes of atheism, he had this observation; "That a head full of vain and unprofitable notions, meeting with a heart full of pride and self-conceitedness, dispose a man directly to be an atheist."

He said he had observed concerning himself, that he was sometimes the worse for eating, but never for abstinence; sometimes the worse for wearing too few clothes, but never for wearing too many; sometimes the worse for speaking, but never for keeping silence.

As to his letters, he was very free in writing to his friends. A good letter, he would say, may perhaps do more good than a good sermon, because the address is more particular, and that which is written remains. His language and expressions in his letters were always pious and heavenly, and seasoned with the salt of grace; and when there was occasion, he would excellently administer counsels, reproofs, or comforts by letter. He

kept no copies of his letters, and it is impossible if we should attempt it, to retrieve them from the hands into which they were scattered. Mr. Rutherford's and Mr. Allen's letters, that (like some of the most excellent of Paul's epistles) bore date out of a prison, have a mighty tincture of their peculiar prison comforts and enlargements; we have none such to produce of Mr. Henry's, no pastoral letters or prison letters; he was himself, in his whole conversation, an epistle of Christ. But we shall only glean up some passages out of such of his letters as are in our hands, which may be affecting and edifying.

To his son, when he was abroad for improvement at London, in the year 1685, and 1686, with the common business of his letters, which was always written with a savour of religion, he would intermix such lines as these: "We are all well here, thanks be to God, the Divine providence watching about our tabernacle, and compassing us about with favour, as with a shield. Our great inquiry is, What shall we render? alas! our renderings are nothing to our receivings; we are like the barren field, on which much cost is bestowed, but the crop is not accordingly.

Our heavenly Father is loading us with his benefits, and we are loading him with our sins; grieving him that comforts us; and how long shall it be so? O that it might be otherwise? that our mercies might be as oil to the wheels, to make us so much the more active and lively in our Master's work, especially considering how it is with our fellow servants; they empty and we fill, they Marah and we Naomi. There may a day come, when it may cost dear to be honest, but after all, to fear God and keep his commandments, is the whole of man. I therefore commend it to you, and you to God, who is a shield and a buckler to them that fear him.

“ We are well, but in daily expectation of that which we are born, and born again to, and that is trouble in this world, yet rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, which we are reaching after, and pressing towards, as we trust you are also. Where you are, you see more of the glittering vanities of this world in a day, than we do here in an age; and are you more and more in love with them, or dead and dying to them? I hope dead and dying to them, for they are poor



things and perish in the using; make many worse that enjoy them, but none better. What is translated Vexation of spirit, Eccl. i. 2. may be read, Feeding upon wind, Hos. xii. 1. and can wind satisfy? the Lord preserve and keep you from all evil, the Lord preserve and keep your soul. We both send you our love, and bless you together and apart, every day, in the name of the Lord. Amen and Amen.

“Be sincere, and humble, and choice in your company, always either getting good or doing good, gathering in or laying out. Remember to keep the heart with all diligence and above all keepings, for there the fountain is, and if that be well kept and clean, the streams will be accordingly.

“’Tis some short refreshment to friends and relations, to see and hear from one another, but it passeth away, and we have here no continuing city, no abiding delights in this world; our rest remains elsewhere; those we have lose much of their sweetness, from the thoughts of parting with them while we enjoy them, but the happiness to come is eternal. After millions of millions of ages (if we may so speak of eternity) as far from

an end as the first moment; and the last of glory will be glory (so some read Prov. xxv. 27,) keep that in your eye, my dear child, and it will as much as any thing dazzle your eyes, to all the fading deceiving vanities of this lower world; and will be a quickening motive to you, to abound always in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. The Lord bless you, who blesses indeed.

“ See that you walk circumspectly, not as the fools, but as the wise; many eyes are upon you, his especially, who is all eye; *Cave, Deus videt. Memento hoc agere;* our blessing with 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

“ The same which is yet the prologue of yours, is of ours also. *Omnia bene, laus Deo!* but he that girdeth on the harness, must not boast as he that puts it off. While the world we live in is under the moon, constant in nothing but inconstancy; and such changes are made in other families, why should we alone promise ourselves immunity from the common lot? there would be no need of faith and patience, which are winter graces, if it should be always summer time with us. We have three unchange-

ables to oppose to all other mutabilities; an unchangeable covenant, an unchangeable God, and an unchangeable heaven: and while these three remain the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever; welcome the will of our heavenly Father in all events that may happen to us: come what will, nothing can come amiss to us.

“Keep the invisible things of the other world always in your eye. He that ventures the loss of an eternal crown and kingdom, for a cup or two of puddle water (such as all terrene pleasures in comparison are) makes a bargain, which no less a space than that which is everlasting will be sufficient to bewail and repent of. How much better is it to lay up in store now a good foundation for time to come, and to lay hold on eternal life? doing those works which we would be willing should hereafter follow us, yet still making the blessed Jesus our all in all.

“The further progress you make in your studies, you will find them the easier; 'tis so with religion, the worst is at first. It is like the picture that frowned at first entrance, but afterwards smiles and looks pleasant. They that walk in sinful ways, meet with

some difficulties at first, which custom conquers, and they become as nothing. 'Tis good accustoming ourselves to that which is good. The more we do, the more we may do in religion. Your acquaintance (I doubt not) increases abroad, and accordingly your watch must be; for by that oftentimes ere we are aware, we are ensnared. He that walketh with wise men shall be wise.

“The return of the spring invites our thanksgiving for the mercy of it. The birds are singing early and late according to their capacity, the praises of their Creator; but man only, that has most cause, finds something else to do. 'Tis redeeming love that is the most admirable love; less than an eternity will not suffice to adore it in. Lord, how is it! Lord, what is man! as the streams lead to the fountain, so should all our mercies lead us to that. We both of us send you our most affectionate love and blessing: blessing? that is, we pray and beseech the most blessed God, even our own God, to give you his blessing, for he only can command the blessing; and those whom he blesses are blessed indeed. Let us still hear to our comfort, that you walk in the

truth, living above the things of the world, as dead to them. The Lord in mercy fit us for his will in the next providence, public and personal, for time is always teeming.

“Your improvement is our joy. Be sincere and serious, clothed with humility, abounding always in the work of the Lord; and when you have done all, saying I am an unprofitable servant. ’Twas the good advice of the moral philosopher, In your converse with men, *distrust*; but I must add, in every thing towards God, *believe*. Expect temptation and a snare at every turn, and walk accordingly. We have a good cause, a vanquished enemy, a good second, and extraordinary pay; for he that overcomes needs not desire to be more happy than the second and third of the revelation speaks him to be. The God of all mercy and grace compass you about always with his favour as with a shield!

“I would have you redeem time, for hearing the word in season, and out of season; your other studies will prosper never the worse, especially if you could return immediately from the closet again, with cooling divertisements by the way.

“See your need of Christ more and more, and live upon him; no life like it, so sweet, so safe. *Christus meus mihi in omnia.* We cannot be discharged from the guilt of any evil we do, without his merit to satisfy: we cannot move in the performance of any good required, without his Spirit and grace to assist and enable for it; and when we have done all, that all is nothing, without his mediation and intercession to make it acceptable; so that every day, in every thing, he is all in all. Though you are at a distance from us now, we rejoice in the good hope we have through grace, of meeting again in the land of the living, that is, on earth, if God see good; however in heaven, which is the true land of the truly living, and is best of all. The Lord God everlasting be your sun and shield in all your ways: see time hasting away apace towards eternity, and the Judge even at the door, and work accordingly, wherever you are, alone or in company; be always either doing or getting good, sowing or reaping. As for me, I make no other reckoning, but that the time of my departure is at hand, and what trouble I may meet with before, I know not, the will

of the Lord be done: one of my chief cares is, that no iniquity of mine may be laid up for you, which God grant for his mercy's sake in Christ Jesus. Amen.

“Be careful of your health. Remember the rule, *Venienti occurrere*; but especially neglect not the main matter. The soul is the main; if that do well, all's well. Worship God in the spirit; rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. God be gracious unto thee, my son; redeem time, especially for your soul: expect trouble in this world, and prepare for it; expect happiness in the other world, and walk worthy of it, unto all pleasing.

“A good book is a good companion at any time, but especially a good God, who is always ready to hold communion with those that desire and seek communion with him. Keep low and humble in your thoughts and opinion of yourself; but aim high in your desires and expectations, even as high as the kingdom of heaven itself, and resolve to take up with nothing short of it. The Lord guide you in all your ways, and go in and out before you, and preserve you blameless to his heavenly kingdom.”

Immediately after his son was ordained to the work of the ministry at London, in the year 1687, he thus wrote to him: "Are you now a minister of Jesus Christ? hath he counted you faithful, putting you into the ministry? then be faithful; out of love to him feed his lambs; as a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. I hope what you experienced of the presence of God with you in the solemnity, has left upon you a truly indelible character and such impressions, as neither time nor any thing else shall be able to wear out. Remember Psalm lxxi. 16. It is in the eye of sense a bad time to set out in; but in sowing and reaping, clouds and wind must not be heeded. The work is both comfortable and honourable, and the reward rich and sure: and if God be pleased to give opportunity and a heart, though there may be trouble attending it, it will be easily borne. If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. I am and shall be, according to my duty and promise, earnest at the throne of grace on your behalf, that the Lord will pour out upon you of his Holy Spirit, that what he calls you to, he would fit you for; especially that he



would take you off your own bottom, and lay you low in the sense of your own unworthiness, inability, and insufficiency, that you may say with the evangelical prophet, Wo is me, I am undone! and with Jeremiah I am a child; and with Paul, I am nothing. Where this is not, the main thing is wanting; for God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Now the Lord give you that grace to be humble; and then, according to his promise, he will make you rich in every other grace.”

On occasion of affliction in the families of his children by the sickness or death of children, or otherwise, he always wrote some word in season.

“In the furnace again? (says he) but a good friend sits by, and it is only to take away more of the dross. If less fire would do, we should not have it so much and so often. O for faith to trust the Refiner, and to refer all to his will and wisdom, and to wait the issue—for I have been young, and now am old, but I never yet saw it in vain to seek God, and to hope in Him.”

At another time he thus writes: “Tough and knotty blocks must have more and more

wedges; our heavenly Father, when he judges, will overcome. We hear of the death of dear S. T. and chide ourselves for being so often pleased with his little pretty fashions, lest we offended therein, by being too much so. No rival must sit with Him in his throne, who deserves all our love and joy, and has too little of it.”

At another time upon the death of another little one: “The dear little one (says he) made but a short passage through this to another world, where it is to be for ever a living member of the great body, whereof Jesus Christ is the ever-living head; but for which hope there were cause for sorrow indeed. If he that gives takes, and it is but his own, why should we say, What dost thou?

At another time upon the like occasion: “Our quiver of children’s children is not so full, but God can soon empty it; O for grace, grace at such a time, which will do that that nature cannot. The God of all grace supply your need and ours, according to his riches in glory. The Lord is still training you up in his good school; and though no affliction for the present be joyous, but grievous, never-

theless afterwards it yields well; your work is in every thing to bring your will to the will of God.”

To one of his daughters concerning her little ones, he thus writes: “They are but bubbles: we have many warnings to sit loose; the less we rely upon them in our joys and hopes, the more likely to have them continued to us. Our God is a jealous God, nor will he suffer the creature to usurp his throne in our affections.”

Upon the death of a little child but a few days old, he thus writes: “The tidings of the death of your little one were afflicting to us, but the clay must not say to the potter, What dost thou? If he that took be the same that gave, and what he gave and took was his own, by our own consent, it becomes us to say, Blessed be the name of the Lord. I hope you have been learning to acknowledge God in all events, and to take all as from his hand, who has given us to know, I say, to know (for Paul says so) that all things do work together, (not only shall, but do) for our good, that we may be more and more partakers of his holiness. He can make the two left as comfortable to you as all the

three, as all your five could have been. However, if all the cisterns were drawn dry while you have your fountain to go to, you are well; you may also by faith look forward, and say, it was a covenant child, and through mercy, we shall see it again in a better world.”

Upon the sickness of a dear child, he thus writes to the parent: “You and we are taught to say, It is the Lord: upon his will must we wait, and to it must we submit in every thing; not upon constraint, but of choice: not only because he is the potter and we the clay, and therefore in a way of sovereignty he may do what he pleases with us and ours;—but because he is our Father, and will do nothing but what shall be for good to us. The more you can be satisfied in this, and the more willing to resign, the more likely to have. Be strong therefore in the grace which is in Christ Jesus; it is given for such a time of need as this. I hope your fears and ours will be prevented, and pray they may; but thanks be to God, we know the worst of it, and that worst has no harm in it, while the better part is ours, which cannot be taken away from us.”

To one of his children in affliction he writes thus: "It is a time of trial with you, according to the will of your and our heavenly Father. Though you see not yet what he means by it, you shall see. He means you good, and not hurt; he is showing you the vanity of all things under the sun, that your happiness lies not in them, but in himself only; that they and we are passing away, withering flowers; that therefore we may learn to die to them, and live above them, placing our hope and happiness in better things, trusting in him alone who is the rock of ages, who fails not, neither can fail, nor will fail those that fly to Him. I pray you, think not a hard thought of him, no not one hard thought, for he is good, and doth good in all he doth, and therefore all shall work for good: but then, as you are called according to his purpose (blessed be his name for it) so you must love him, and love (you know) thinks no evil, but puts the best construction upon all that the person loved says or does, and so must you, though now for a season, if need be, you are in heaviness."

At another time: "Your times, and the

times of yours, are in the Lord's good hand, whose will is his wisdom. It is one thing (as we read and observed this morning, out of Ezek. xxii.) to be put into a furnace and left there as dross to be consumed; and another thing to be put in as gold or silver to be melted for use, and to have the refiner set by. "You know whom you have believed, keep your hold of the everlasting covenant: he is faithful that hath promised. We pray for you, and we give thanks for you daily, for the cup is mixed, therefore trust in the Lord for ever, and rejoice in the Lord always; again I say rejoice."

To one of his sons-in-law that was a little engaged in building, he thus writes: "Be sure to take God along with you in this, as in all your other affairs; for except he build the house, they labour in vain that build it. Count upon troublesome occurrences in it, and keep the spirit quiet within: and let not God's time nor dues be entrenched upon, and then all will be well."

It was but a little before he died that he wrote thus to one of his children: "We rejoice in God's goodness to you, that your distemper has been a rod shaken only, and

not laid on. He is good, and doth good; and should we not love him, and rest in our love to him? He saith, he doth in his to us, and rejoiceth over us with singing, Zeph. iii. 17. And have we not much more cause? What loveliness in us? What not in him? I pray let me recommend him to your love: love him, love him with all the powers of your soul, and out of love to him please him. He is pleased with honest endeavours to please him; though, after all, in many things we come short, for we are not under the law, but under grace.”

To one of his children recovered from sickness he gives this hint: “Remember that a new life must be a new life indeed: reprieves extraordinary call for returns extraordinary.”

The last journey he made to London was in August 1690; before he went, he sent his farewell letter to his son at Chester: “I am going forth this morning towards the great city not knowing but it may be Mount Nebo to me: therefore I send you this as full of blessings as it can hold, to yourself, my daughter your wife, all the rest of my daughters, their husbands, and all the little ones,

together and severally. If I could command the blessings, I would; but I pray to Him that hath and doth, and I trust will. The Lord bless you, and keep you, and lift up the light of his countenance upon you. As you have received, and you for your part preached Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him: keeping conscience always void of offence, both towards God, and towards all men. Love your mother, and be dutiful to her, and live in love and peace among yourselves, and the God of love and peace that hath been, will be with you. Amen."

FINIS.



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